الطبخ المغربي

MOROCCAN COOKING

LATIFA BENNANI-SMIRES

Until now Moroccan cooking has found few to sing its praises.

And yet it is the richest as regards variety and the most select in quality of all the traditional North African schools of cookery.

It is cooking born of the Mediterranean, just like the French. I was explaining one day that Castelnaudary had taken the "Confit d'Oie" (preserved goose) from the famous cassoulet of Toulouse which is one of its descendants. Is it wrong for the father to take from his son a part of the inheritance he has already received?

The same can be said of Moroccan traditions. They are a source from which everyone can help himself.

If it is true that certain methods and recipes go back thousands of years to Ancient Egypt or Phoenicia, the same thing can be said for all countries that have been influenced by their neighbours at some indeterminate period of their history.

On their way to the legendary Tarchich from where they brought pewter back, the Phoenicians used to stop, often for a long time, between Melilla and Centa, before passing the Straits of Gibraltar, and around Tangiers on their way back. Being the merchants of the Antiquity, they used to exchange their knowledge for an essential hospitality.

Long before the birth of Christ or Mohammed they were familiar with the symbols of food and astrological influences.

The seed does not grow the same wherever it falls.

We owe a great deal to Latifa Bennani Smires.. Not only does she reveal her vast experience to us but she does so as clearly as possible. I feel on reading her book that it covers all the existing knowledge on the subject and this is a very rare quality.

I was very surprised by Moroccan cooking, not by its traditional aspect but by its refinement.

Nowadays it is fashionable to be exotic and I shall not criticize this fashion as such crazes are not only necessary but beneficial.

Few foreign schools of cookery, outside the French or traditional Chinese ones, have such a truly original character.

It is fitting that a "vestal" should produce in the tangible form of a written work something which has for so long remained an oral tradition.

Paradoxical as it may seem, I am not going to wish success to Latifa Bennani Smires but to her readers. Success in preparing the dishes of course, but also in creating the happy atmosphere of a hospitable table.

It is not just a question of yearning after the sunshine, the little donkeys, bastelas and Mechoui. What matters is discovering the tajines, the often highly unexpected use made of different spices and herbs and the aromas which precede all these delights. Love will surely find its fulfilment and friendship an opportunity of growing deeper.

I am not going to wish you a hearty appetite to enjoy this food as I know it will come when you start eating!

Raymond Oliver

A side trip through our culinary traditions

What used to be an individual's lifetime set of culinary traditions, often quaint or curious and replete with varying degrees of symbolism, is tending to disappear, swept away and lost in the tumult of modern living.

From the cradle to the grave, these traditions, gradually accumulated down through the centuries, used to be blindly complied with in this country with its millenary civilization.

Upon the birth of a child, the *sellou,* a pyramid of flour and powdered almonds, restores her strength to the new mother—a strength that will be transferred to the suckling infant through her milk.

To symbolize her child's eventual marriage, on the first day of its life, if it is a boy baby, the mother will partake of the flesh of a hen representing the future wife, or, if it is a girl baby, the flesh of a rooster, symbolizing the happy husband-to-be.

On the seventh day after the birth, a sheep will be slaughtered—whose first name will be bequeathed to the child—and on that same morning, a delectable array of all kinds of pancakes (*mlaoui, ghraïf, beghrir,* etc.) will be served for breakfast. The flowing folds of her kaftan will luckily conceal these and many other dietary indulgences lavished for forty days upon the young mother.

A host of other festivities bid us welcome—weddings, circumcisions, religious celebrations. Each gathering is marked by its gastronomic traditions.

Let us observe a young bride starting out on the first day of her marriage.

While she is still at her parents' home, eagerly awaiting the moment when she will join her new family, her mother serves her food "unstirred by any fork", so that her future life may be "peaceful and free of unrest."

Meanwhile, at the bridegroom's home, to the background strains of Andalusian music, the guests, after the *bastella, mechoui* or chicken with preserved lemons, enjoy the traditional *tfaïa* decorated with almonds and hard-boiled eggs and the renowned *haloua rhifa,* concocted by specialists in the art.

On the following day the bride's parents will deliver to the newly-weds, for their breakfast, a dish of rice cooked in milk and a steamed sheep's head. The bride, "pure as milk", will thenceforth be able to run her household while "keeping her head about her"...

One week later, her mettle will be tested. Rising early early in the dawn, she will prepare the yeast that is to make the bread rise, thereby introducing abundance into her home.

The mother-in-law, ever curious, will further test her daughter-in-law's culinary skill. A *tajine* of fish may establish the bride's reputation as a first-rate *cordon bleu.* On that day, to let the fragrance of musk dispel the cooking odors, she will, chaperoned, betake herself to the Moorish baths. When she returns home, there will be mint tea, coffee flavored with orangeblossom extract and cinnamon, *krachel,* soft-boiled eggs, and grilled almonds to help her regain her strength. The latter will be greatly needed, for, as long as she lives with her husband's family, day in day out, while awaiting the birth of her first son–an event that will ensure her position–she will dutifully obey her mother-in-law by rolling the couscous, preparing the flaked pastry for the *bastella*, baking the cakes for celebrations, etc.

For Aïd-el-Kebir day, she will deftly blend the spices for the *mrouzia* (a sugary concoction featuring raisins and almonds, guaranteed to keep more than one month without refrigeration).

On the occasion of Aïd-el-Mouloud, everyone will relish the *lââssida*, a cooked semolina dish swimming in honey, which the bride will prepare in the early hours before breakfast.

She will attend the ceremonies of dried meat (*khili*). Together with the other women, she will demonstrate her enthusiasm to the rhythm of tambourines, while the butcher makes ready to slaughter the calf or steer.

Still pursuing her round of activities, for New Year's Day she will cook the *herbel*—crushed wheat with milk—a token of plenty for the coming year. Later in the day she may scorch her dainty fingers making pancakes that puff up with air on contact with heat (*graïf mekhtamrine*), but each individual bursting pancake will mean prosperity and happiness for her.

She will pride herself on serving the best *harira* for the Ramadan, in successfully producing the crispest *griouchs* and the most nourishing *sellou*. She will soak *bejmat* in milk for convalescents, and she will serve dates, nuts, and soft-boiled eggs during the children's festival, or Achoura.

She will rejoice at the sacrifice of the sheep presented to the masons on the occasion of the laying of the foundation of her own new house.

And when this snug haven is ready for occupancy, she will clean it lovingly, spray it with milk, burn sandalwood, throw open the doors to the *tolbas* and serve them the first couscous and the first mechoui, marking the threshold of her independence, while the *fquis* say prayers for the couple's prosperity—a prosperity that will enable this young woman in her turn to become a devoted mother, a hard-to-please mother-in-law, and a doting grandmother.

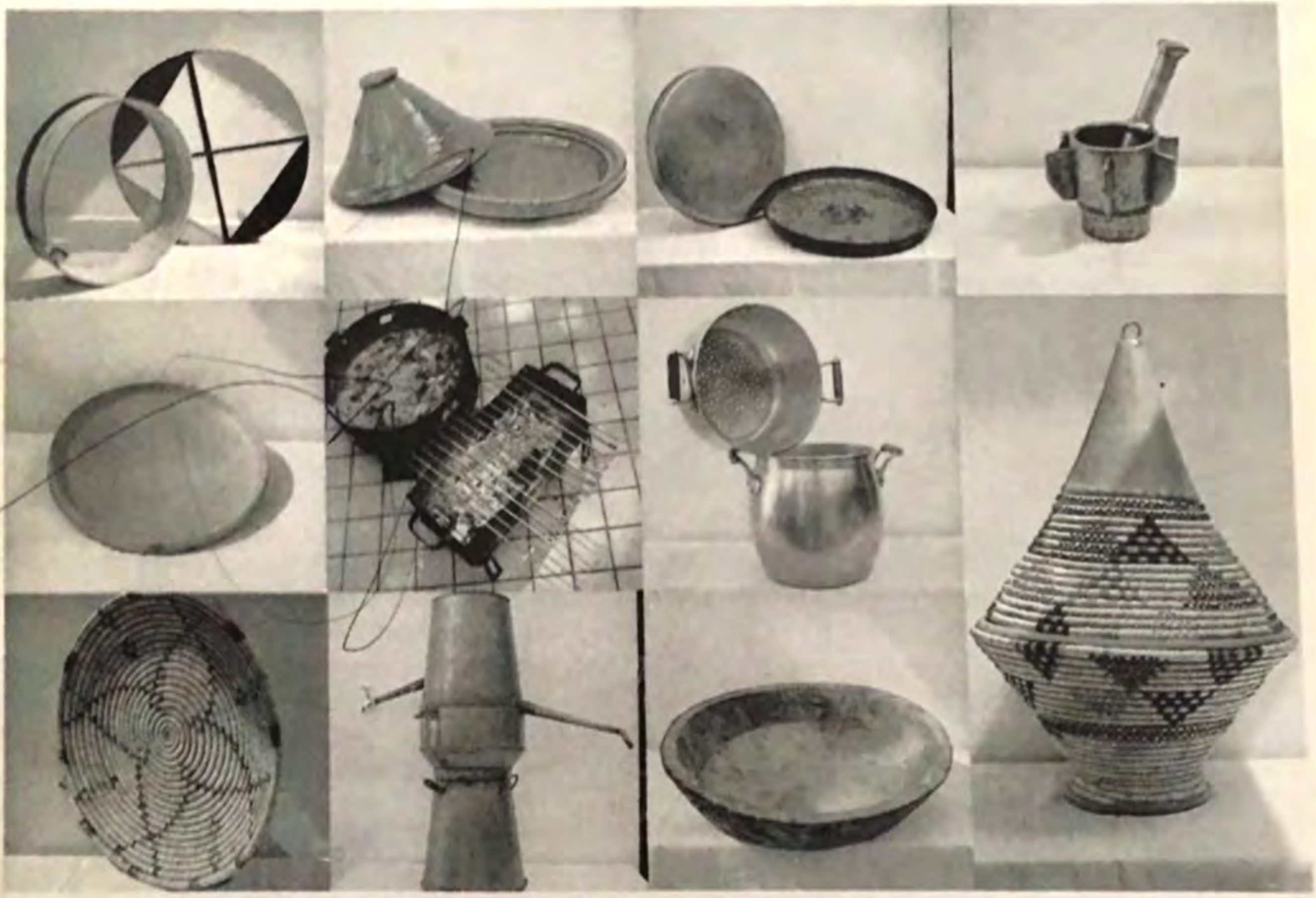
Although many of these aspects of life are vanishing, there still remains, anchored deep inside each of us, that small something, a tiny, elusive pang of regret that will cause us to pause, bemused, in the midst of an increasingly busy and down-to-earth world.

When my grandmother, in a voice tinged with emotion, described to me how her life had been—a lifetime of traditions, principles, and simplicity–I was admiring her plenitude, for the serenity that radiated from her peaceful visage, while at the same time my own face was resolutely and gratefully turned in the direction of a new world.

Latifa Bennani-Smires

cooking utensils

Here are the utensils you will need to prepare Moroccan dishes. You will find all of them in the Moroccan markets. Among the most widely used are pottery, copper, wood, "doum", alfalfa and leather goods. With mehraz, old-fashioned gsââ, khabiate, tajin-slaoui and ghorbel, Moroccan cookery carries on the traditions of rustic charm.



1 *GHORBEL:* a metal sieve which separates the bran from crushed cereals - 2 *CHTATO:* a silk sieve - 3 *TAJINE SLAOUI:* a round earthenware dish with pointed lid - 4 *TBSIL DIAL OUARKA:* a round dish the same shape as the preceding one for making puff pastry - 5 *TBSIL DIAL BASTELA:* dish of tin-lined copper for braising Bastela - 6 *MEHRAZ:* mortar - 7 *MAQLA DIAL TRAB:* round, earthenware dish used for the preparation of rghaïfs and beghrir - 8 *ROUND MEJMAR:* hot charcoal barbecue made of iron or copper which goes with tbsil dial ouarka - 9 *RECTANGULAR MEJMAR:* rectangular charcoal barbecue with notched side edges for grilling on skewers - 10 *M'GHAZEL:* iron or silver skewers - 11 *KESKES:* upper part of a couscous steamer 12 *COUSCOUS POT:* lower part of the couscous steamer designed for use with the keskes - 13 *TBECK:* large, shallow basket for sorting the grains of couscous according to size - 14 *QUETTARA:* still for distilling rose and orange-flower water - 15 *GSAA:* a very large, deep dish made of earthenware, or wood, for mixing bread and cake dough, etc. - 16 *TBICKA:* doum basket, trimmed with leather, topped with a pointed lid, keeps bread fresh - 17 *TENJIR:* very large boiling-pot for cooking khlii (dried meat).

measures used

1 teaglassful - 2 dl (2 gills) water capacity; 1 soupspoonful - standard size; 1 teaspoonful - standard size; 1 coffespoonful - stantard size; 1 glassful - one third of a litre (3 gills) water capacity; 1 cooking ladle - standard size; 1 soup bowl - one third of a litre (3 gills) water capacity.

cooking utensils used in the preparation of fresh tea

SINIYA: Round tray made of copper or engraved brass on legs: two trays are needed–one large and one small. The larger one is for putting the teapot and the glasses on, the smaller has three kinds of cylindrical boxes, made of the same metal as the trays, in which are placed all the ingredients needed to make the tea.

RBAÏA : A cylindrical box of copper or brass, the size of which can vary.

GLASSES: These are small crystal glasses, multi-coloured for highly festive occasions. Otherwise, they can be just ordinary glass.

BABBOR : A magnificently engraved English copper or brass samovar, which is less and less used, for boiling the water.

BERRAD: Teapot.

sauces

The sauces, which are impregnated with spices and prepared, on the whole, from meat or chicken stock in which these have simmered for a long time, can be divided into three categories:

M'qualli: a yellow sauce made from oil, ginger and saffron.

M'hammer: red sauce made essentially from butter, sweet peppers and cumin.

K'dra: a yellow sauce which is lighter than the m'qualli sauce prepared with onions, butter, pepper and saffron.

M'chermel: red sauce obtained by mixing certain quantities of each of the above sauces.

These basic sauces can be infinitely varied by personal touches. Parsley, coriander, garlic, onion, olives, preserved lemons, lemon juice, eggs, hot peppers, sugar, honey and cinnamon are all flavourings which can be added to these basic sauces to improve the taste according to the dish being prepared.

spices

Basic spices generally used in the preparation of tajines:
Felfla hloua: sweet peppers
Felfla harra: hot peppers (strong)
Felfla soudania: very hot peppers from North Africa and Senegal.
Saafrane beldi: saffron (pounded stigmas of the flowers)
Saafrane roumi: meadow saffron, colouring matter
Ibzar: black pepper
Chkinjbir: ginger
Karfa: cinnamon
Kamoun: cumin
All these spices are used after having been ground.

other spices: Ras El Hanout

Ras el Hanout is a mixture of these ground spices
Oâqulla: cardamon
Bsibsa: mace
Gouza sahraouia: maniguette
Gouzt Ettib: nutmeg
Nouiouara: type of pepper
Debbant el Hend: cantharis

Dar Felfell: long peppers
Querkoub: curcuma
Skinjbir: ginger
Ibzar: black pepper
Lissan ettir: fruit of the ash-tree
Zbil ellaïdoure: belladonna berries
Skinjbir bied: white ginger

Ras El Hanout is used to prepare the Mrouzia tajine. All these spices are, of course, washed, dried and ground. They are available in any Moroccan market either whole or in powdered form.

herbs

Chiba: absinthe, often used in tea
Nafââ: aniseed
Habbet hlaoua: green, Spanish aniseed
Kerouiya: caraway seeds
Elranj: bitter orange
Kasbour: coriander seeds, leaves or powder
Meska: gum-acacia (gum-arabic)
Khzama: lavender
Ourka sidna Moussa: bay leaves

Mââdnous: parsley
Arksous: liquorice
Salmiya: sage
Jeljlane: sesame
Zaatar: thyme
Louisa: verbena

Merdeddouch: marjoram
Naâna-lkama: mint
Fliou: wild mint

perfumes

Zhar: orange-flower water
Ma ouard: rose-water

Spices, plants, cooking utensils, different sorts of couscous, pastry layers for Bastela and tins, included Khlii (preserved dried food) can be found 30 rue François Miron, Paris, France - the essential spices can also be found in other French big cities, such as Marseilles.

In Britain or in the United States, you should look for a specialized shop (in London: try Harrod's or soho market).

preserved food

olives

Olives should be prepared in autumn.
There are 3 varieties of olives: black, green and violet.
Pick them over first before preserving.

violet olives

For 10 kg (22 lbs) of violet olives the following ingredients are required:
30 kg (66 lbs) of bitter oranges (elranj) which should be bought 40 days after the olives
2 kg 1/2 of salt (5 lbs 8 oz).

1. Choose violet olives (between green and black). Make an incision from top to bottom of the olive as far as the stone. Wash and place in a jar or bottles, covering them in water. Seal and leave in this water for a month.
2. After a month, change the water, seal again and leave for a further 10 days.
3. At the end of this period, wash, peel and quarter the bitter oranges, taking care to mix immediately with the salt, and pass through a vegetable sieve.
Empty the water from the bottles of olives and replace it with the juice of the bitter oranges, taking care to fill right up to the brim again. Close the bottles again. If there is not enough juice to cover, fill up with water. Do not eat for 4 or 5 days.

green olives

10 kg (22 lbs) green olives

Break the olives with a stone, wash them and place in bottles filled with water. Change the water morning and night for three days. Once the olives are no longer bitter, stop changing the water, but otherwise go on doing so every 2 days until the olives mellow. Cover with water right up to the brim and be careful to close the bottles properly.
Always take the olives out with a perfectly clean spoon or ladle. These olives can be eaten as they are with a little salt or used to accompany tajines.

black olives

15 kg (33 lbs) of black olives
4 kg (9 lbs) of salt

1. Clean the olives and throw away any that are over-ripe or crushed; wash carefully. Mix with salt and leave to drain in a reed basket. Tilt the basket slightly by propping it against a large stone and put several other stones on top of the olives to press them. They will exude a black liquid.
2. After 5 days, spread the olives out on a plastic cloth in the sun for a whole day, then put them back in the basket with the stones on top for a further 5 days. Do this 3 more times after the same lapse of time.
3. After the third time, put the olives in the sun for 2 days running, then smear with groundnut oil. The olives are ready to eat. Put them in bottles stuffing them in tightly with the palm of the hand so that the olives do not go dry. Cover carefully.
N.B.: Every time you take olives from the bottle, press the remaining ones down hard before closing.

khlii

Khlii is used in Moroccan cooking. It is made from beef and can be kept for as long as 2 years. It is often used in everyday family meals. The following is the recipe for a small amount (about 4 or 5 jars) but in families in towns such as Marrakesh, Fez, etc., Khlii is prepared once a year in great quantities—100 kilos (221 lbs) and even more.
I advise you to try making a little at a time as it is certainly easier and you are more likely to be successful.

seasoning or marinade known as "chermoula"

Ingredients for 20 kg (44 lbs) of beef:
1 kg 150 g (2 lbs 9 oz) of cooking salt
750 g (1 lb 10 oz) of ground coriander seeds (kasbour yabs)
150 g (5 oz) of ground cumin
250 g (9 oz) of crushed garlic
1/2 a glassful of vinegar
1 glassful of olive oil

preparation and drying

Ask the butcher to cut up the meat (20 kg - 44 lbs) in *long* strips like thick cord about 3 or 4 cm (1" to 1 1/2") in diameter. Wash those strips and leave to drain. Mix the meat, once it is well drained, with the chermoula marinade, which you have already prepared, and leave to soak overnight in a large container.
Stir again the next morning to make sure that all the strips of meat are equally soaked in the marinade.
At about 6 p.m., put the strips of meat out to dry on a special line. Leave them to dry for 2 days without taking them in at night. On the third day, and the 5 following days, hang them out in the morning and take them in again at nightfall.
Khlii should be prepared in the summer when the sun is very hot so that it dries properly. To make sure that it is sufficiently dry, cut off a piece with a knife: the inside should no longer be the slightest bit soft and if pressed with the fingers should not give out a single drop of moisture.

cooking after drying (approximately 2 ½ hours)

Clean and cup up 4 kg (9 lbs) of beef fat into small pieces. Rinse and drain. Put 8 litres (14 pints) of water in a large boiling-pot. Bring to the boil and put in the pieces of beef fat. Put the lid on and leave to simmer for about 10 minutes and add 7 litres (12 pints) of groundnut oil, plus 1 litre (2 pints) of olive oil, then the dried meat and the remainder of the marinade (chermoula) which has been powdered after drying.
Cover the boiling-pot until it comes to the boil and then take off the lid and leave to cook rapidly for half an hour. Then leave to cook over a moderate heat *until the water has completely evaporated* and the meat is just in the oil. Stir carefully at frequent intervals during the cooking, with a very big wooden spoon, paying special attention to prevent anything sticking to the bottom of the pot. A large wooden spoon should be used for this. When all the water has completely evaporated, test the khlii to see if it is cooked by breaking off a piece with the fingers. Add another half a litre (a pint) of water (to make the meat more tender). Leave to evaporate and take off the fire. To check that there is no more water, throw a little of the fat from the pot on the fire. The flame should flare up.

N.B. If the meat is cooked before the water evaporates, take it out of the pot and leave the liquid to boil down.

Once the khlii is cooked, take the pot off the flame, pour the fat into a jar, remove the pieces of meat with a skewer and put them in the "gsâa". Leave to get cold. When in has all cooled, put the meat into the preserving jars and cover with the still liquid fat. Leave open to air for a few hours and then close the jars with an airtight covering.

AGRISSE

A certain amount of meat and what is left of the chermoula will remain on the bottom of the pot. This mixture is called agrisse. Put the pot back over the heat to make sure that there is no moisture left. Take off the heat after a few minutes and leave to cool. Keep in a bottle for making "rghaïf del Ferrane".

pickled peppers

For 2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of green peppers the following ingredients are required:

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of tomatoes
1 teaglassful of salt
3 or 4 small hot, long-shaped peppers (optional)
1 teaglassful of vinegar

Wash the peppers, slice in 4 lengthways, leaving the pieces joined at the stalk end. Place in a bottle with the salt and vinegar, cover with water and shut the bottle carefully. Wait 2 days and then add the tomatoes sliced across in two. Use a bottle which has never contained any fat. When the peppers start going yellow, they are ready to eat.

preserved lemons

If possible use "bousserra" or "doqq" lemons.

Prepare preserved lemons in spring when the fruit is ripe and golden yellow. Wash the lemons in a bucket. Divide the fruit into 4 quarters, taking care to leave the pieces joined at the stalk end. Salt the inside carefully, put together again and place in a preserving bottle, or jar, which has never been used for fatty foods. Cover right up to the top with tepid water, put a perfectly clean stone on the fruit and cover. Store in a dry place. One month later the lemons are ready for eating. These lemons are used for flavouring tajines. Just before using, throw the inside part away, wash, and use only the zest cut in quarters.

smen (preserved melted butter)

Smen is less and less used nowadays in Moroccan cooking. As cooking with fresh butter is far more digestible, I am only mentioning smen for reference.

For 30 kg (66 lbs) of butter you need
2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of salt

Mix the salt with the butter and leave overnight. The next day melt over a gentle heat, stirring gently and skim while it boils.

When the butter has melted, pour it into a jar through fine muslin. Leave to cool and cover the jar. The smen is now ready and can be kept for a year.

different types of dough

leaven

I have included this recipe specially for preparing "griouche" cakes which are far better made with leaven.
In bygone days this leaven was used for making bread, rghaif, fritters, etc., but it has now been replaced by baker's yeast which can be bought ready-made.

Ingredients:

1 glass of flour	*1 clove of garlic*
1 handful of cornflour	*1 good pinch of salt*
1 soupspoonful of groundnut oil	*water*

Sift the flour, add salt, form a well, and mix with a little water; add a soupspoonful of oil and knead vigorously for about 20 minutes. The dough should be of the same consistency as for bread. Roll into a ball. Peel a clove of garlic and push inside the dough. Place in a bowl and leave to rise for at least 24 hours. Take out the garlic.

Take a little of the bread dough each day and use to leaven the next day's bread, thus establishing a regular supply.

dough for ouarka (layers for bastela)

Ingredients for a bastela of 8 pigeons:

- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of hard wheat flour sifted with a silk sieve (chtato)*
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of fine sifted flour*
- *1 teaspoonful of salt*

Mix to a dough of the same consistency as for bread. Knead thoroughly, taking care not to spoil the elasticity, then continue adding water, little by little, beating in air. This should have the consistency of dough for Moroccan fritters. To test, take a little of the dough between the fingers. Let go, as if to let it drop, and catch it as it falls. The dough should follow the movement of the hand.

Continue kneading the dough, lifting it with both hands placed flat on top of it and knock back several times against the table. Then take this soft elastic dough, put it into a bowl, cover with 1 or 2 mm of water (1/20" or 1/10") and leave for about 1 hour.

dough for rghaïf (a kind of pancake)

Rghaif is a kind of pancake which can be prepared in several different ways. Tasty and varied, these pancake which can be stuffed according to your fancy with pigeons.

almonds, chicken meat or khlii (preserved meat), can also be eaten as they are with sugar or honey. They are made from a flaky type of pastry.

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of flour
1 level soupspoonful of salt
a knob of yeast the size of a walnut (approx. 20 g - 1 oz)
1/4 litre (1/2 pt) of water (varying according to the absorbability of the flour)

Sift the flour into a gsââ or simply into the table. Add the salt and the yeast diluted with a little water, then mix briskly with tepid water until a stiff dough is produced.

Knead this dough vigorously for half an hour, adding a little water if it is too stiff. It should be a little softer than dough for bread but very elastic and easy to handle.
Smear the dough with oil for making rghaif and form small balls, by taking small pieces of the dough in the right hand which are then shaped into rings between the thumb and the forefinger of the left hand. Then press into a smooth ball. Keep the dough and the hands oily so that the dough slips easily.
The size of these balls depends on the type of rghaif to be prepared.

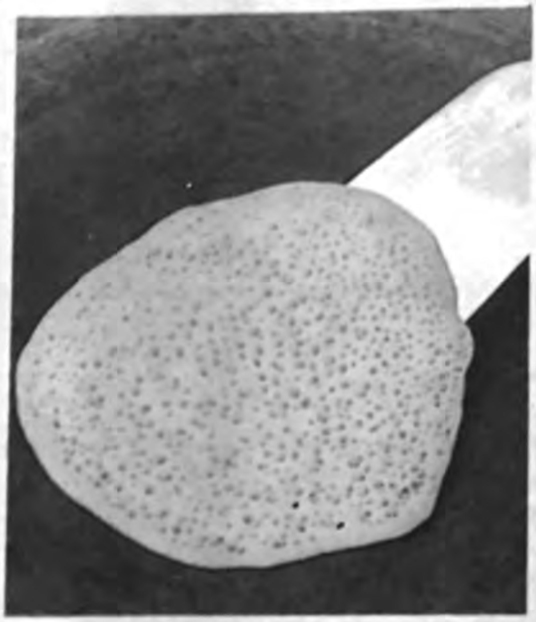
beghrir

Beghrir is a type of pancake which is smooth on one side and full of little bubbles on the other. It is very light and melts in the mouth, and should be eaten with sugar or honey.

For about 35 pancakes the following ingredients are required:
375 g (14 oz) of fine semolina
125 g (4 oz) of hard wheat flour sifted through a silk sieve
1 teaspoonful of salt
1/4 litre (1/2 pt) of milk
3/4 litre (1 ½ pt) of water
3 eggs
40 g (1 ½ oz) of yeast mixed with 2 soupspoonfuls of water

Sift the semolina and the flour and put in a cooking pot: add the salt, warm the milk and water and add the eggs, after beating, and the yeast which has been mixed with a little water.

Mix the batter gently until it has the consistency of a very malleable dough. Beat briskly for 10 minutes. Pass through a vegetable sieve and add the rest of the warm milk and water, stirring with a ladle to produce a thin but velvety batter. Cover and leave to prove near a source of heat for 2 hours. The batter will then have a frothy appearance, on the surface.



Put an earthenware pan (Meqla dial Trab) on hot embers. The fire should be quite hot. Leave the pan to heat. Mix the batter with a ladle. Clean the pan with a cloch dipped in egg.

Pour about 1/4 of a ladleful of batter into the pan and spread lightly over the surface with the back of the ladle. Leave to cook through on one side.
Thousands of little bubbles will rise gradually.

When the pancake is cooked, remove gently from the pan with a spatula. Place, smooth side down, on a clean cloth. Clean the pan again and continue as before until there is no more batter left.

N.B. Do not pile the pancakes on top of each other until they are quite cold.
To serve, heat a good lump of butter in the pan, dip the first pancake quickly in the butter, place it on a dish and put another pancake without butter on top of it. Prepare all the pancakes in this way–one buttered, one dry–and then spread out on a baking sheet, bubbly side up. Cover and heat in a slow oven for about 10 minutes. Serve hot with warm honey or sugar.

bastela

A delicious starter for a festive dinner. Both sweet and spicy, crisp and light, it is made of fine layers of pastry (called ouarka) like transparent pancakes, stuffed with pigeons and almonds.
Its preparation requires a certain amount of practice and a lot of skill but, you can take my word for it, it is one of the most delicious dishes to be found in Moroccan cooking.

stuffing for bastela

Ingredients for about 12 people:

8 pigeons
3 soups bowls full to the brim with chopped parsley
1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of grated onions
450 g (1 lb) of butter
8 eggs
1 teaspoonful of pepper
1/2 teaspoonful of cinnamon
1/2 teaspoonful of saffron (crushed saffron flowers)
300 g (11 oz) of almonds and oil for frying them
1 teaglass full to the brim with sugar
salt

Wash the pigeons and put them, whole, in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, the chopped parsley, the grated onions, pepper, saffron, cinnamon and sugar.
Put the water in later only if there is no liquid left from the pigeons before they are cooked. Cook on a good medium heat and stir from time to time. Take the pigeons out of the saucepan when cooked and drain them of any stuffing that may have got inside them during cooking. Leave the stuffing to cook, stirring constantly, until all the water has evaporated. Then add 8 eggs beaten as for an omelette and pour over gently, stirring all the time and removing the saucepan from the heat.
After cooking, cut the pigeons up without boning them. In the meantime, skin the almonds and fry them in oil. Take off the fire as soon as they begin to colour and turn out at once into a strainer to avoid going black. Crush coarsely in a mortar or pass through a vegetable sieve, using the coarsest grid. Then add to the sugar. Add 3 soupspoonfuls of the oil in which the almonds have been fried to the pigeon stuffing and keep the remainder of the oil.

how to cook ouarka

(for the pastry see page 14)

Utensils required for cooking:

1 round barbecue, either iron or copper
1 tin-plated copper tray specially designed to cook these layers of pastry (tbsil dial ouarka)

Light the charcoal beforehand. Put some lighted embers in the barbecue—the fire should be regularly spaced out and moderately hot. Put the tray on the barbecue, smooth side towards the exterior. Wipe with a slightly oiled cloth and clean in the same way, if necessary, if the pastry sticks to the bottom.

Take a little of the dough between the fingers after wetting the hand.

Tap the tray, which is already hot, by lowering and raising the hand regularly. In this way, the elastic dough will be deftly caught as soon as it touches the tray and will leave a fine whitefilm each time.

These thin films of dough, stuck together by the reapeated movement of the hand, should form a round layer about 30 to 33 cm (approx. 12" to 13") in diameter which is easily detached from the tray by pulling gently towards you.

The layer, cooked on one side only, is placed on a clean cloth, close at hand, shiny side up. Begin again until all the dough is cooked, piling the layers one on top of the other. Always place them, shiny side up, so that they do not stick on each other. If the fire goes down, add more burning charcoal. The tray should be kept at an even heat. When all the layers are ready, wrap up in a clean cloth and put aside.
The preparation of these layers requires special skill which can only be acquired with long practice. If you do not succeed, you can find some ready made in shops but they are not nearly so delicate as those made at home.

trimmings for bastela

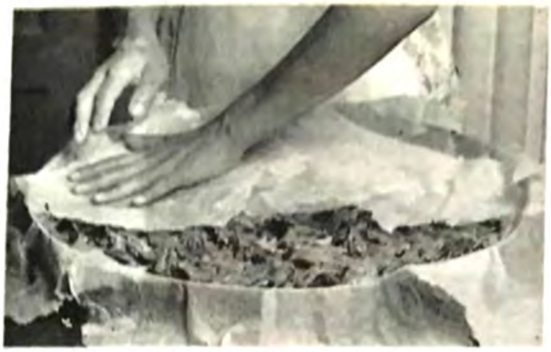
Utensils *Tin-lined copper tray (tbsil dial bastela) 50 to 60 cm (1',7" × 1',11") in diameter or rectangular baking sheet 40 × 50 approx. (1',4" × 1',7").*

Have the stuffing, pigeons, almonds and about 40 of the pastry layers (ouarka) at hand. Oil the baking sheet or tbsil.

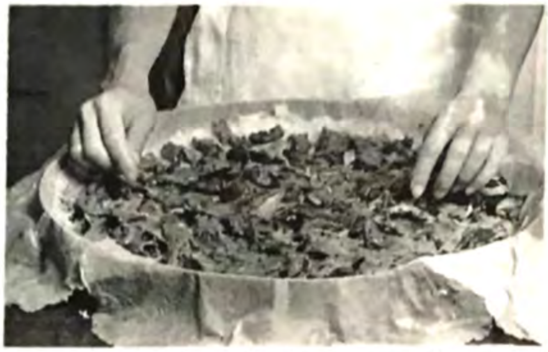
Cover the tray with a first set of pastry layers, shiny side down, overlapping them so that the edges hang over the edge of the tray.

Be careful to separate each layer.

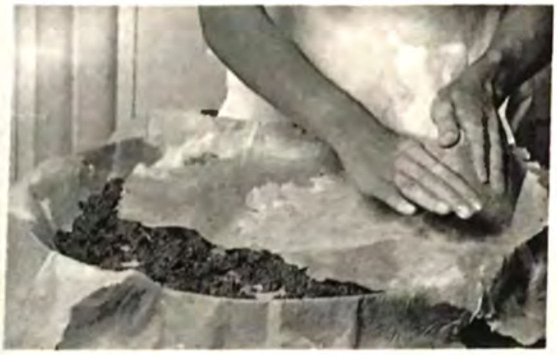
Cover with a second set of layers to strengthen and then cover the surface with the pigeon stuffing.



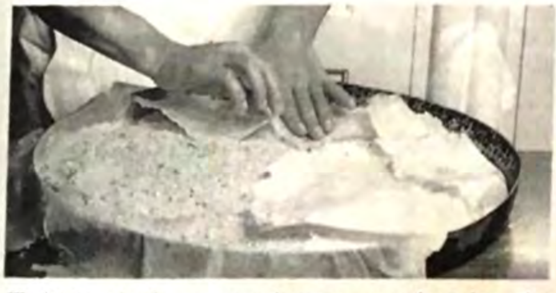
Cover the stuffing with 2 more sets of pastry layers without going over the edges of the tray this time.



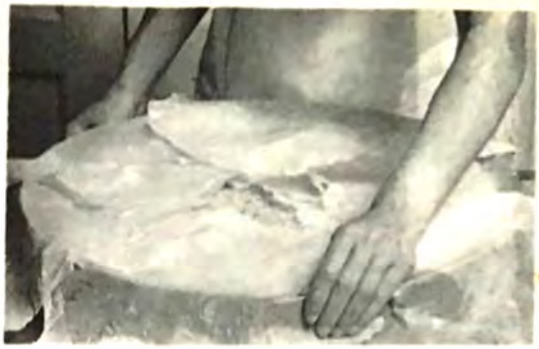
Spread the pieces of pigeon over the pastry layers.



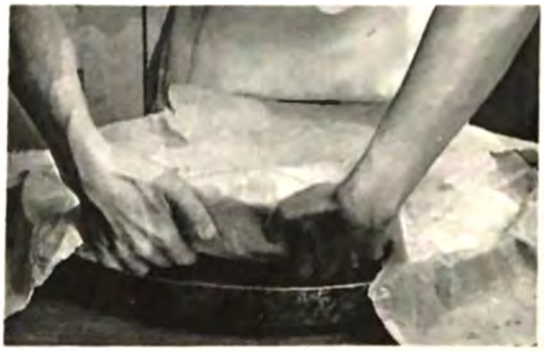
Put another 2 sets of pastry layers on top of the pigeons.
Sprinkle evenly with the crushed, sugared almonds.



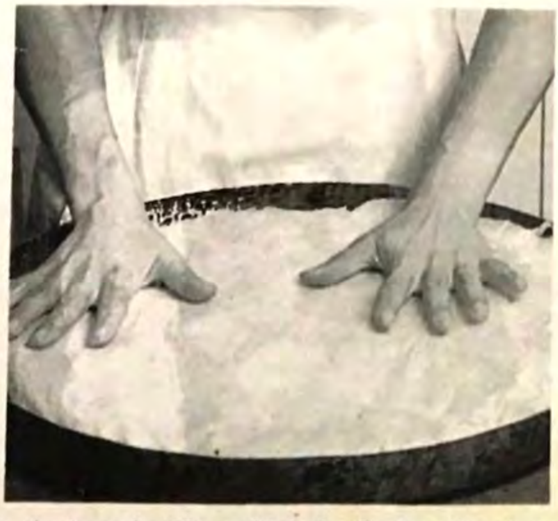
Fold back the pastry layers over-lapping the edges of the tray, sticking them together with egg yolk.



Place a further 2 sets of pastry layers, shiny side up, over-lapping each other, as above, so that their edges hang over the edges of the tray.



Tuck in the edges of the pastry as if making a bed. Brush the surface and the edges with the flavoured oil then with egg yolk. Make a sort of flat pie, either round or square, and 3 to 4 cm (1 1/4" to 1 3/4") thick. Smear with the oil in which the almonds have been cooked.



N.B. There must not be two many pastry layers in the bastela. If too thick the flacky effect is not as crusty.

cooking on a baking sheet in an oven

Cook in a moderate oven for about 20 minutes. When the bastela is browned on one side take out of the oven.

Turn the bastela out quickly onto another baking sheet, 15 to 20 minutes before serving, brush the edges with oil again and put back into the oven to brown the other side.

cooking in a "tbsil dial bastela"

It takes about three quarters of an hour on each side to brown the bastela. Light the charcoal in advance. At the time of browning, spread a few pieces of burning braise over the barbecue leaving the centre free. Place a flat stone on the edge of the barbecue so that the tray is slightly on the slope. Turn the tray often to brown the bastela evenly all over. Smear the edges with the almond flavoured oil now and again. Check that the first side is nicely brown and crisp by lifting carefully all round with a palette knife. Turn the bastela onto another identical tray, slip back into the "tbsil dial bastela" and brown the other side.

Serve on a big round or rectangular tray, according to the shape of the bastela, almond side up. Sprinkle very lightly with icing sugar.

N.B. The pigeons can be replaced by small chicken with their offal.

bread

Moroccan bread is baked at home, usually in the morning. It is made from sifted hard wheat flour, more or less white, and on occasions, of extra-fine white flour. It has the advantage of remaining fresh for almost 24 hours.

The loaves are round and vary in size from one house to another. They are kept away from dust and damp in "tbickas".

Ingredients for 3 loaves measuring about 20 cm (8") across:

1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of flour (according to choice)
1 level soupspoonful of salt
25 g (1 oz) of yeast
1 soupspoonful of sesame and green aniseed mixed
2 ½ glasses of tepid water (approx.)

Sift the flour into a "gsââ" or simply straight on to the kitchen table. Add the salt, the yeast mixed with a little water, and a little tepid water, and mix thoroughly to make a stiff dough. Knead vigorously, breaking the dough several times. Pound the dough with the fists and add a little extra water if it seems too stiff. Do this for 15 to 20 minutes.

When the dough becomes softer, add the spoonful of sesame and green aniseed rubbed on the table with a little water. Roll each loaf on the table with a circular movement to give it a cone shape. This should be done with the palms of the hands.

Place the cones on a little sprinkled flour and shape 3 loaves into rounds about 2 cm thick (1"). Leave to rise in a warm place covered with a clean cloth and a blanket kept specially for this purpose.

The loaves need between 1 and 1 ½ hours to rise. Test by pressing gently with the finger. If the dough is sufficiently risen it will come back into shape. Prick each loaf with a fork in 3 or 4 different places and put in the oven.

Bastela (above) and bread (below)

COUSCOUS

Couscous is the most typical national Moroccan dish. This skilfully rolled semolina is the basis of several spicy dishes as well as hot and sweet ones. Couscous can be served as a one-course family meal or at the end of a ceremonial banquet.

The grains of semolina should be fine, regular, separate and never sticky. To succeed in making this requires skill, patience and a knack that can only be acquired with long experience.

I am including here some ideas as to how couscous is rolled, but it is essential to watch a cook's hands delicately manipulating the fine golden grains of semolina to realize how difficult it is to do oneself.

I recommend that you give it out to be rolled, if you live in Morocco, or simply buy the couscous grains in packets. Excellent varieties are on sale, which if fresh, can replace the couscous rolled at home.

how to roll couscous

Ingredients for 10 people:

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of coarse semolina
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of fine sifted flour
salt
water

Have ready a "ghorbal", a "tbeck", salt water, a clean cloth, semolina and sifted flour. Put a bowl of semolina in the "gsâa", sprinkle with a little cold water with salt and roll the semolina with the palm of the hand with even movements so as to roll all the grains and separate them. Roll again with a little flour and when the grains form small balls, begin the same operation again, adding flour and water with salt little by little, until the grains are well rolled. Put these grains in a "ghorbal" for sorting according to their size. Put the smallest grains of equal size on a clean cloth. Rub the other bigger ones with the palm of the hand in a "tbeck" adding a little flour. Sort again in the "ghorbal" according to size and put the smaller ones with those already on the cloth.

Begin again until all the grains of semolina and flour have been used. The grains should be fine, quite separate and of even size. A soupspoonful of oil should now be added.
It is possible to prepare a large amount of couscous for preserving. It should be steamed for half and hour. Once the desired amount is steamed, it should be put in the sun to dry, spread out on a clean cloth. Wait until the grains are quite dry before putting in closed jars.

khlii couscous with seven vegetables

Ingredients for 10 people:

- *500 g (1lb 2 oz) of coarse semolina rolled with:*
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of sifted flour (see page 22) or:*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of ready prepared packet couscous*
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of cabbage*
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of red pumpkin*
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of carrots*
- *250 g (9 oz) of tomatoes*
- *250 g (9 oz) of potatoes*
- *250 g (9 oz) of aubergines*
- *3 or 4 small hot peppers (chillies)*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of fresh kidney beans*
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of Khlii covered in fat*
- *2 soupspoonfuls of sweet peppers*
- *1 teaspoonful of pepper*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of saffron (mixed crushed saffron flowers and packet saffron)*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of onions*
- *6 litres (11 pts) of water*
- *enough salt to season*
- *150 g (5 oz) of butter to stir into the couscous when cooked*

Cooking time: about 2 hours.
Put some water in the bottom part of the couscous steamer, add salt, sweet pepper. pepper, saffron, 2 quartered onions, 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of khlii. When it comes to the boil. take out the strips of khlii, put on one side and add the cabbage cut into quarters. Bring to the boil. Then put the rolled couscous (see preparation) in the upper part of the steamer over the part in which the cabbage, etc., are cooking. Make the two parts of the steamer airtight by fixing a cloth steeped in flour and water paste round the join between the two so that the steam can only escape from the top.
When the couscous begins to let off steam, leave to cook for half an hour.
Remove the couscous and turn out into the "gsââ" and press lightly with a ladle to separate the grains. Leave to cool and sprinkle with a little cold water. Let the couscous air and then add more cold water, repeating this operation until the grains are swollen and saturated in water.
Leave to absorb all the water. In the meantime, about 1 hour before serving, put the remaining ingredients (the unpeeled aubergines, tomatoes, onions, carrots–peeled and cut up in quarters, the kidney beans from which the shoots have been removed. and the small hot chillies) in the pot which is still on the fire.

Cook the pumpkins and potatoes cut up in quarters, separately in a little of the stock. When the stock in the pot comes to the boil again, check the seasoning. Put the couscous in the "keskes", put back over the boiling pot and seal the 2 parts as before. When the couscous starts giving off steam, take off the heat and pour into the "gsâà". Add the butter, mix well and add as much stock as the couscous can absorb, stirring all the time. Serve on a large round dish after making a well in the middle of the couscous in which the vegetables are placed with the strips of khlii which have been reheated in the stock. Serve at once with extra stock served separately for those who prefer it more moist.

"k'dra" couscous with courgettes, kidney beans and turnips

Ingredients for 10 people

Cooking time: 2 to 2 ½ hours depending on the quality of the meat

- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of coarse semolina rolled in 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of fine flour (see preparation) or:*
- *1 packet of couscous weighing 1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz)*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of shoulder of mutton in pieces or:*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of knuckle of veal*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of courgettes (baby marrows)*
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of turnips*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of fresh kidney beans*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of onions*
- *1 handful of chopped coriander*
- *1 soupspoonful of pepper*
- *1/2 level teaspoonful of saffron (preferably crushed saffron flowers)*
- *150 g (5 oz) of butter, in the stock*
- *100 g (4 oz) of butter for the couscous*
- *6 litres (11 pts) of water*
- *salt*

Put the pieces of meat in the lower part of the couscous steamer. Add 6 litres (11 pts) of water, 2 onions cut up into quarters, pepper, butter, saffron and salt. Bring to the boil and place the "keskes" (upper part of the steamer) full of rolled couscous (see preparation) on the boiling pot. Seal the two parts together as before with a cloth steeped in flour and water paste so that the steam can only escape from the top.

After the couscous has stopped to steam, let it cook for half an hour, then take off the couscous and pour into the "gsâà". Press lightly with the ladle to separate the grains, leave to get cold and sprinkle with cold water. Let the couscous air and then repeat the same operation until the grains are swollen and saturated with water. Leave to absorb all the water.

In the meantime, and about 1 hour before serving, put the remainder of the ingredients in the pot which is still boiling over the fire–first the turnips cut in quarters and the kidney beans from which the shoots have been removed, then, after a quarter of an hour's boiling, the baby marrows cut in 4 and seeded but not peeled, the sliced onions and chopped coriander. When it has boiled for a while check the seasoning and put the couscous back into the keskes. Put the keskes on top of the pot and again seal the two parts of the steamer. When the couscous starts steaming, take off the heat and pour into the "gsâà", add the butter, mix well and add as much stock as the semolina can absorb while stirring. Put the couscous on a large round dish, form a cone, with a well in the middle for the meat and vegetables and serve immediately.

« K'dra » couscous with courgettes, kidney beans (page 25)
« Bidaoui » couscous with seven vegetables (page 27) and « Medfoun » couscous (page 26)

"k'dra" couscous with baby marrows, kidney beans and turnips and creamy milk sauce

The same preparation as above. Replace the meat with chicken. When cooked mix a little stock with 1 litre (2 pts) of boiling milk, add salt and pour over the couscous. Put the couscous, as before, on a large round dish, form a cone, with the meat and the vegetables in the centre. Decorate the couscous with a few hard-boiled eggs cut in half and place the vegetables all around. Serve immediately.

"k'dra" couscous with sheep's heads, baby marrows, kidney beans and turnips

Place 2 or 3 sheep's heads over a flame to burn off the wool; wash and scrape hard. Cut each head into 4 pieces after having shaken them briskly to make sure that any maggots in the mouth or ears fall out before cooking. Wash again in salt and water, brush with a stiff brush and rinse well.

Prepare the couscous in exactly the same way as for the K'dra Couscous with courgettes, kidney beans and turnips, replacing the meat with sheep's heads.

"k'dra" couscous with raisins and chick-peas

Ingredients for 8 to 10 people
Cooking time: approximately 2 hours

- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of coarse semolina rolled in 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of fine sifted flour* (see preparation) or:
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of packet couscous*
- *1 chicken or 1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of meat (either mutton or veal knuckle)*
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of stoned raisins*
- *1 glassful of chick-pease soaked overnight*
- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of onions*
- *1 soupspoonful of pepper*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of saffron (preferably crushed saffron flowers)*
- *150 g (5 oz) butter for the stock*
- *100 g (4 oz) butter for mixing with the couscous when cooked*
- *5 litres (9 pts) of water*
- *salt*

Put 5 litres (9 pts) of water in the lower part of a couscous steamer. Add 2 sliced onions, the chick-peas, the chicken or meat cut into pieces, salt, pepper, saffron and butter. Bring to the boil. Put the steamer containing the rolled couscous over the boiling lower part and seal the two parts with a strip of cloth steeped in flour and water waste so that the water can only escape from the top. Cook for half an hour after the couscous has stopped to steam.

Take the couscous off the heat and turn into the gsââ, pressing lightly with a ladle to separate the grains. Leave to cool then sprinkle with cold water, air and repeat the operation until the grains of semolina are swollen and saturated with water. Leave until all the moisture is absorbed. See if the chicken is cooked and take off the heat. Check the seasoning. Half an hour before serving, cut the onions into large pieces and put in the stock on the heat. Add the cleaned and washed stoned raisins. Bring to the boil and then put the couscous back into the steamer, sealing the two parts again.

« K'dra » couscous with raisins and chick-peas

When the couscous begins to steam, take off the heat and turn into the "gsâậ"; mix in the butter and as much stock as the couscous will absorb, stirring all the time. Heap the couscous on a large round dish, form a cone, with the meat or chicken in a well in the middle, together with the onions, chick-peas and raisins. Serve immediately with extra stock for those who like it.

"k'dra" couscous with onions and honey

Ingredients for 8 to 10 people

- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of coarse semolina*
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of fine sifted flour* (see preparation) or:
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of couscous ready-prepared in a packet*
- *1 chicken or 1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of mutton or knuckle of veal*
- *1 teaspoonful of pepper*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of saffron (preferably crushed saffron flowers)*
- *100 g (4 oz) of butter for the stock*
- *100 g (4 oz) of butter for mixing with the couscous after cooking*
- *100 g (4 oz) of butter for browning the par-boiled onions*
- *3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz) of onions*
- *1 stick of cinnamon*
- *1 teaspoonful of cinnamon*
- *1 glassful of honey*
- *5 litres (9 pts) of water*
- *salt*

Put 5 litres (9 pts) of water in the lower part of the couscous steamer. Add salt, pepper, saffron, the stick of cinnamon, the chicken or meat, cut up into pieces, 2 sliced onions and 100 g (4 oz) of butter. Bring to the boil. Put the upper part of the steamer, containing the couscous, on the boiling pot. Seal the 2 parts with a strip of cloth steeped in flour and water paste so that the steam can only escape through the top. Leave to cook for half an hour after it begins to steam. Take the couscous off the boiler and pour into the "gsâậ", press lightly with a ladle to separate the grains of semolina. Leave to cool and sprinkle with cold water, let the couscous air and then begin the operation again until the grains are swollen and saturated with water. Leave until all the moisture has been absorbed.

Check the seasoning of the stock. If the chicken or the meat is cooked, take out of the stock.

In the meantime slice the onions into rings. Bring to the boil separately and strain; then brown well in the butter and add to them the teaspoonful of cinnamon, honey and a pinch of salt. Mix for 5 minutes in the pan and then take off the heat. Half an hour before the meal is to be served, put the pot of stock back on the heat with the couscous over the top in the upper part of the steamer. Seal the two parts. As soon as the couscous begins to steam, turn out into the "gsâậ", add the butter, mix well and pour over as much stock as the couscous will absorb, stirring all the time. Heap the couscous on a large round dish, form a cone, with the meat and reheated browned onions in a well in the middle. Serve at once with extra stock separately for those who prefer it.

"bidaoui" couscous with seven vegetables

Ingredients for 10 people

- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of coarse semolina rolled in 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of sifted flour* (see preparation)
- *or: 1 packet of couscous weighing 1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz)*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of meat (knuckle of veal or shoulder of mutton)*
- *1 medium-sized Savoy cabbage*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of onions*
- *4 or 5 tomatoes*
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of red pumpkins*
- *250 (9 oz) of turnips*
- *250 g (9 oz) of aubergines*
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of carrots*
- *2 hot peppers (chillies)*
- *1 handful of chopped coriander*
- *150 g (5 oz) of butter for the stock*
- *150 g (5 oz) of butter for the cooked couscous*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of saffron (preferably crushed saffron flowers)*
- *1 soupspoonful of pepper*
- *6 litres (11 pts) of water*
- *salt*

Put the pieces of meat cut into pieces, 2 sliced onions, the cabbage cut into pieces, 150 g (5 oz) of butter, saffron, pepper and salt in the bottom part of the couscous steamer. Pour over the 6 litres (11 pints) of water and boil.

Put the upper part of the steamer full of rolled couscous over the boiling stock. Seal the two parts of the steamer with a piece of cloth steeped in flour and water paste so that the steam can only escape from the top. Leave to cook for half an hour from the moment the couscous begins to steam. Take the couscous off the heat and pour into the "gsâà", press lightly with a ladle to separate the grains, leave to get cold and sprinkle with cold water. Let the couscous air and then sprinkle with water again, repeating the operation until the grains are swollen and soaked with water. Leave to absorb all the water.

In the meantime and about 1 hour before serving, place in the pot which is still boiling, the tomatoes, the aubergines quartered but not peeled, the onions, carrots and turnips—peeled and quartered—the hot peppers and the chopped coriander.

Cook the potatoes and the pumpkin cut in quarters separately in a little of the stock. Check the seasoning of the stock and, half an hour before serving, put the couscous back to steam sealing the 2 parts as before. When the couscous starts to steam, take off the heat and turn out into the "gsâà", add the butter, mix well and pour over as much stock as the couscous can absorb, stirring all the time. Put on a large round dish with the couscous heaped into a cone and the meat and vegetables in a hollow in the middle. Serve at once with extra stock served separately for those who like it more moist.

dry bone couscous with seven vegetables

Soak the dried bones (see preparation page 56) in water and rinse well. Prepare the dry bone couscous in the same way as the khlii one, replacing the khlii with 7 or 8 dried bones and 100 g (4 oz) of butter. Do not salt until after having tasted the boiling stock. Leave the bones in the bottom part of the steamer throughout the cooking of the couscous.

couscous for stuffing (pigeons, chickens, meat)

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of coarse semolina rolled into very fine grains with 250 g (9 oz) of flour (see preparation)
or 1 packet of couscous weighing 1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz)
1 teaglass of orange-flower water
3 glassfuls of caster sugar
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of stoneless raisins
300 g (11 oz) of melted butter
2 level soupspoonfuls of cinnamon
400 g (14 oz) of almonds

Put 4 or 5 litres of water (7 or 9 pts) to boil in the lower part of the couscous steamer and bring to the boil. Coat the well-rolled couscous with a spoonful of oil and put in the steamer over the boiling water. As soon as it begins to steam take off the heat and turn into the "gsââ". (If a packet of prepared couscous is used, leave to cook for half an hour from the time it begins to steam for the first time.) Crush lightly with a ladle to separate the grains, leave to cool, add a little salt and sprinkle the 2 soupspoonfuls of orange-flower water over it, then 3 soupspoonfuls of melted butter and 5 soupspoonfuls of caster sugar. Leave for a quarter of an hour and put back in the steamer over the boiling pot. Repeat the cooking operation 6 times running, adding each time the orange-flower water, butter and sugar in the same proportions. Leave for a quarter of an hour between each cooking period. When put to cook for the seventh and last time, add the washed and cleaned raisins to the pot underneath the couscous. Take off the heat when it begins to steam. Turn the couscous and the raisins into the "gsââ", crush lightly with a ladle to separate the grains, add two soupspoonfuls of cinnamon and 400 g (14 oz) of almonds which have been skinned, fried in boiling oil and crushed coarsely in a mortar.

This couscous is used as a stuffing for chicken. pigeon and stuffed meats.

"medfoun" couscous

Ingredients for 10 people
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of coarse semolina finely rolled in:
200 g (7 oz) of fine flour (see preparation)
the offal from 6 chickens or:
750 g (1 lb 10 oz) of shoulder of mutton cut into small pieces
5 chopped onions
1/2 teaspoonful of pepper
enough saffron to cover the tip of a knife (crushed flowers)
1 stick of cinnamon or one teaspoonful of cinnamon
100 g (4 oz) of butter for the sauce
100 g (4 oz) of butter to mix with the cooked couscous
salt

Cook the offal or the meat separately in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the chopped onions, salt, pepper, saffron, cinnamon and butter. Cover with water. When the meat is cooked, allow all the moisture to boil away until the butter reappears. Take off the heat and put on one side.

In the meantime, cook the couscous for the first time in the steamer for half an hour as described for "saycouk" page 148. Turn out into the "gsââ", press lightly to separate the grains, leave to get cold and sprinkle with 2 glassfuls of water. Leave on one side to air.

A quarter of an hour before serving, cook the couscous a second time over the steam. When it begins to steam, wait 5 minutes before turning it out into the "gsââ". Separate the grains with a ladle and add 100 g (4 oz) of butter. Re-heat the offal or meat and mix the sauce with the couscous.

Place a layer of plain couscous at the bottom of a round dish, then a layer of offal, or meat, then a second layer of couscous formed into a dome.

Decorate with cinnamon and serve with bowls of caster sugar and fresh, unboiled milk.

"belboula" couscous (barley semolina)

Belboula is prepared in the same way as the khlii couscous with seven vegetables or the k'dra couscous with marrows, kidney-beans and turnips.

Belboula is not rolled but simply washed and salted. It must be steamed twice for half an hour each time. Do not forget to sprinkle it with water after cooking for the first time. Use 1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of barley semolina in the proportions given in the preceding couscous recipes.

"baddaz" couscous (fine corn semolina)

Belboula is also prepared as the recipes for the seven vegetables and khlii couscous or the k'dra couscous with marrows, kidney-beans and turnips.

Put 1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of semolina in the "gsââ". Baste with 2 soupspoonfuls of oil and add 1 heaped teaspoonful of salt. Moisten the semolina gradually with a glassful of water. rolling it with the palms of the hands.

Put in the upper part of the couscous steamer, over the boiling lower part, and leave to cook for 1 hour. Turn out, separate the grains, add water and leave to cool. Steam a second time for a quarter of an hour. Then pour on as much stock as the couscous can absorb. Pour over melted butter and serve. Arrange on a round dish as described for the other types of couscous.

"chââriya medfouna"

Ingredients for 10 people
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of vermicelli

Prepare the chicken offal or meat as described in the recipe for the medfouna couscous and put on one side.

Half an hour before the meal, put the vermicelli in the upper part of the couscous steamer, over the lower half containing boiling salt water. As soon as it begins to steam, turn out into the boiling water. Allow to boil a few seconds, stirring all the time, then take off the heat, strain in the upper part of the steamer and rinse with cold water. Put back to steam a second time in the steamer over the boiling salt water. Take off the heat as soon as it begins to steam.

Turn out into a "gsââ", mix with 100 g (4 oz) of butter and the re-heated sauce from the chicken offal or meat.

Put a layer of vermicelli in a large round dish then a layer of either the pieces of meat of chicken offal. Cover with a second layer of vermicelli, shaped into a dome.

Decorate with cinnamon and serve with bowls of caster sugar and fresh, unboiled milk.

soups

The national soup is called "harira". Throughout the 30 days of Ramadan, each household prepares this heady, perfumed soup which scents the narrow alleys at sunset. It is eaten with dates or honey cakes (griouche, and almond briouats).

traditional lentil harira

Ingredients for 12 people. Cooking time 2 ½ hours.
It is prepared in two different parts: 1) the stock; 2) the tédouira.

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1) the stock (tka-taâ) approx 1 ½ hours to cook)

250 g (9 oz) of diced mutton and veal
3 or 4 small bones with a very little meat on them
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of rather small, whole onions
1/2 teaspoonful of saffron (half crushed saffron flowers and half prepared packet saffron)
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1 piece of butter the size of a walnut
250 g (9 oz) of lentils
salt
1 ½ litre (3 pts) of water for the stock

Cook the lentils in salted water, strain and sprinkle with the juice of a lemon. Put on one side.

Put the other ingredients to cook in a covered saucepan. Leave to simmer on a low heat after bringing to the boil. Take the onions out as soon as they are cooked so that they remain whole.

After about an hour, check that the meat is cooked and remove from the heat. Add the lentils and the onions.

2) Tédouira: about 1 hour's cooking

1 bunch of coriander (kasbour)
1 bunch of parsley
1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of sieved tomatoes or one tin of tomato extract mixed with 1 litre
(2 pts) of water
2 ½ litres (5 pts) of water
3/4 of a teaglassful of lemon juice
1 piece of butter the size of a walnut
200 g (7 oz) of flour
salt

Put the water on to boil with the sieved tomatoes, or the water and tomato extract mixture. Allow to boil for a quarter of an hour then add the stock from the lentils, the meat and the onions, etc., which should be left in the saucepan. Away from the heat add the flour mixed with 1 litre (2 pints) of water to the soup little by little, stirring briskly to avoid lumps. Put back on the heat and go on stirring gently until boiling point is reached. Add the finely chopped parsley and the coriander which has been rinsed and pounded in the mortar (mehraz) with sufficient salt for seasoning, together with 1 litre (2 pints) of water in the pot while stirring (The parsley and coriander can be chopped up in an electric mixer with a little water.) Check the seasoning and remove from the heat when the soup is hot.

Harira soup should be creamy but not thick.

N.B. The meat can be replaced with the offal of 3 or 4 chickens.

chick-pea harira

Ingredients for 12 people

2 tea-glasses full to the brim of chick-peas soaked overnight and peeled the next morning.
1/2 teaglassful of rice cooked separately in salt water

Same preparation as for lentil harira except that the lentils are replaced by the chick-peas cooked directly in the stock. Add the rice when the soup is ready for eating.

chick-pea and kidney-bean soup (dried and skinned)

Ingredients for 12 people

1 teaglassful of chick-peas soaked overnight and skinned the next morning
1 teaglassful of dried kidney-beans
1/2 glassful of rice cooked in salt water

Add the kidney-beans and prepare as for lentil harira, cooking both the chick-peas and the kidney-beans directly in the stock.

Vermicelli can be used instead of rice. In this case, it should be added to the soup to cook at the last moment.

bidaouia harira

Ingredients for 12 people. Takes 2 ½ hours to prepare in two different parts:
1) the stock; 2) the tédouira.

1) the stock (tka taâ)—1 ½ hours cooking time (approx.)
- *4 litres (7 pts) of water*
- *1 bowl of chick-peas soaked overnight and skinned the next morning*
- *250 g (9 oz) of diced mutton or beef*
- *1 finely chopped celery heart*
- *1 bunch of chopped coriander (kasbour)*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of cinnamon*
- *1 piece of butter the size of a walnut*
- *1 chopped onion*
- *1 small bunch of parsley (chopped)*
- *4 whole onions*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of tomato pulp*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of saffron (mixed prepared packaged saffron and crushed saffron flowers)*
- *1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper*
- *salt*
- *3 or 4 bones with a little meat on them*

Put all these ingredients to cook in a covered saucepan. Bring to the boil, lower the heat and leave to simmer gently. Take out the whole onions as soon as they are cooked. After about 50 to 60 minutes, check if the meat is done and, if so, take off the heat.

2) Tédouira: 1 hour's cooking time (approx.)
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of tomatoes cut in quarters and passed through a vegetable sieve*
- *1 bunch of coriander (kasbour)*
- *juice of 3 lemons*
- *1 whole egg*
- *1/2 teaglassful of vermicelli*
- *1/2 teaglassful of noodles*
- *200 g (7 oz) of flour*
- *salt*

Put the sieved tomatoes in a saucepan, add the stock leaving the meat, kidney-beans, onions, etc., in the saucepan in which they were cooked. Leave the tomato juice to boil for a quarter of an hour. Take off the heat for a few minutes. Mix the flour with water and pour little by little into the stock, stirring briskly to avoid lumps. Put back over the heat and continue stirring gently. Bring to the boil, add the noodles and vermicelli, bring back to boiling and then lower the heat. Then take the coriander off the stalks, wash and pour in a mortar (mahraz) with enough salt for the seasoning. Pour into the saucepan, stirring gently with a ladle. Add the lemon juice, the rest of the stock (Tédouira), the beaten egg, stir and check the seasoning. Bring to the boil and remove from the heat.

N.B. This harira can be made with chick-peas, kidney-beans, lentils or all 3 together. It is thicker than the traditional harira.

marrakchia harira (without meat)

Ingredients for 8 people. Cooking time 1 hour

- *3 litres (5 pts) of water*
- *1 glassful of dried, skinned kidney-beans*
- *1 soupspoonful of khlii fat or a soupspoonful of oil*
- *150 g (5 oz) of flour*
- *1/2 teaglassful of rice cooked separately in a little salt water*
- *1 level teaspoonful of paprika (sweet pepper)*
- *1 pinch of crushed hot pepper - chilli - (optional)*
- *1 small bunch of coriander (kasbour)*
- *salt*

Wash the kidney-beans and put into a saucepan with the paprika, and the khlii fat or the oil. Add the water, cover and cook.

When the kidney-beans are nearly cooked, mix the flour with a little water, pass through a sieve and add little by little to the stock, away from the heat, stirring briskly to avoid lumps. Bring to the boil and lower the heat. After about 10 minutes, add the rice cooked separately in a little water, and the coriander which has been pounded with the requisite amount of salt for seasoning either in a mortar or an electric blender.

Bring to the boil, correct the seasoning and withdraw from the heat. This harira should be of the same consistency as the traditional harira. Sometimes the kidney-beans absorb a little more water than allowed for, in which case add a bit more.

kerouiya harira (caraway)

Ingredients for 8 people. Preparation and cooking time 1 hour.

- *3 litres (5 pts) of water*
- *2 soupspoonfuls of cleaned and pounded caraway seeds*
- *150 g (5 oz) of flour*
- *1 bunch of mint (6 or 7 sprigs)*
- *1/2 teaglassful of lemon juice*
- *3 or 4 grains of gum-acacia (meska) pounded with the caraway seeds*
- *salt*

Put the water on to boil. mix the flour with water. strain through a fine sieve and pour into the hot (not boiling) water, stirring briskly. Let it boil while stirring gently. Stalk the mint leaves, pound hard in a mortar (mehraz) with enough salt for the seasoning, dilute with a little water and pour into the pot. Add the caraway seeds and the gum-acacia, soaked in water. Bring to the boil, stirring gently. Should there be any lumps, pass through a fine sieve, away from the heat. Before serving, re-heat and add the lemon juice. This harira must be rich and creamy. It is used to accompany steamed sheeps heads.

small diced vegetable soup

Ingredients for 8 to 10 people. Preparation time: 1 hour; cooking time: about 1 hour

2 ½ litres (5 pts) of water
250 g (9 oz) of carrots
2 turnips
1 finely sliced onion
4 or 5 small whole onions
250 g (9 oz) of potatoes
1 leek
1 stick of celery
250 g (9 oz) of meat diced small
2 or 3 small, fairly meaty mutton bones
3 or 4 sprigs of chopped coriander (kasbour)
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of sieved tomatoes
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of crushed saffron flowers and prepared packet saffron mixed
1 knob of butter the size of a walnut
salt

Cut the vegetables (carrots, turnips, celery and leek) into small cubes, wash and place in a saucepan with the meat and the bones. Season with the pepper, salt and saffron, add the butter and cover with 2 litres (4 pints) of water. Bring to the boil and leave to cook with the lid on for about 1 hour before adding the diced potatoes, the sieved tomatoes and chopped coriander. When the potatoes are cooked, gradually sprinkle the vermicelli and simmer for a few minutes. Check the seasoning and remove from the heat.

wheat dchicha soup (crushed grains of wheat)

Ingredients for 10 people. Cooking time 1 to 1 ¼ hours

4 litres (7 pts) of water
1 soup-bowlful of dchicha (200 g) (7 oz)
1 soupspoonful of sweet peppers (paprika)
1 pinch of Sudan felfla (hot pimento dired and crushed)
1 teaglassful of dried kidney-beans (skinned)—150 g (5 oz)
1 bunch of coriander (kasbour) washed and pounded with enough salt for the seasoning
1 piece of khlii weighing about 100 g (4 oz) diced (see preparation page 12)

Put the water on to boil, rinse the wheat in a strainer and pour into the saucepan. Add the paprika, the hot pepper (felfla) and the diced khlii.

After boiling for half an hour, add the kidney-beans. When they are cooked, add the coriander, pounded with salt, and bring back to the boil. Check the seasoning and take off the heat.

nafââ (aniseed) semolina soup

Serve with dates.

Ingredients for 8 people. Cooking time: 45 minutes (approx.)

2 litres (4 pts) of hot water
3/4 of a soup-bowlful of coarse semolina
1/2 teaspoonful of pepper
1 good pinch of saffron
1 knob of butter the size of a walnut
2 teaspoonfuls of ground nafaâ (aniseed)
salt

Pour the semolina into hot (not boiling) water, put on the heat and add the pepper, saffron and butter, stirring gently. Bring to boil and continue stirring from time to time. Cook on a low heat for about half an hour. When the semolina is cooked, soft and swollen, add the aniseed diluted in a little water, stir and remove from the heat. If the semolina absorbs more water than allowed for add a little more.

vermicelli in sauce

Ingredients for 10 people
Preparation and cooking time: about 1 ½ hours

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of mutton cut into small pieces
5 or 6 small fleshy mutton bones
5 thinly sliced onions
1 teaspoonful of beldi saffron and ready-prepared saffron
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1 knob of butter the size of a walnut
1/2 teaglassful of oil
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of vermicelli
4 tomatoes (optional)
salt

Put the meat, sliced onions, bones and skinned and quartered tomatoes in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add the butter, oil, pepper, salt and saffron. Cover with 2 litres (4 pints) of water and leave to simmer on a low heat for about 1 hour.

20 minutes before serving, pour three-quarters of stock (without the ingredients) into another saucepan. Add 1 litre (2 pts) of water and a knob of butter and leave to boil. Cook for 5 minutes and then take off the heat.

The vermicelli should normally absorb all the stock. Turn it into a large dish and put the remainder of the stock containing the ingredients on top, after re-heating. Serve at once.

rice in sauce

Ingredients for 10 people.

Same ingredients and preparation as for vermicelli in sauce. Leave the rice to cook until the grains burst (25 to 30 minutes approximately) and serve as described above.

mhamsa (very coarse rolled couscous) soup

Ingredients for 10 people. Preparation and cooking time: 2 hours.

In the past the mhamsa was rolled at home, cooked in steam and dried in the sun for 2 days. It can now be found in shops already prepared. Mhamsa in sauce is prepared in the same way as vermicelli in sauce. It absorbs more water and unlike vermicelli has to be cooked for half an hour.

gumbo soup (Mlokhia with Khlii)

How to prepare the gumbo powder used to make gumbo soup

In summer cut the gumbos up in small pices, wipe with a clean cloth but do not wash and leave to dry in the sun for about 10 days. Take in at night because of the damp night air.

When dry, pound hard in a mortar (mehraz) and pass this powder through a silk sieve (chtato). Put in a closed bottle and keep in a dry place. Can be kept for a year.

Ingredients for 8 people

- *3 litres (5 pts) of water*
- *1 soup-bowlful of dried, skinned kidney-beans*
- *8 small whole onions*
- *1 heaped soupspoonful of sweet pepper (paprika) mixed with hot pepper (chilli) according to taste*
- *1 heaped soupspoonful of gumbo powder*
- *2 small pieces of khlii (about 200 g - 7 oz) (see page 12)*
- *1 soupspoonful of khlii fat*
- *salt*

Cook all these ingredients in a covered saucepan with 3 litres (5 pts) of water. When it starts to boil, take out the pieces of khlii and put on one side. Take the saucepan off the heat as soon as the kidney-beans and onions are cooked and after having checked the seasoning. Cut the khlii into small pieces and put back into the saucepan to re-heat. This dish is eaten with Moroccan bread cooked the day before, cut into pieces and dipped in the boiling hot soup.

When it is cooked, if the kidney beans have absorbed too much water and the soup is rather thick, add a little more water.

Chick-pea harira (above) and Gumbo soup (below)

entrees

briouats

Briouats are small envelopes of "ouarka" (flakes of pastry used for bastela) stuffed in different ways—with minced meat (kefta), rice cooked in milk, almonds, etc. They can also be stuffed with brains, sausages or fish, according to taste. Fried and browned in boiling oil, they are crispy and delicious.

different ways of folding briouats

They can be folded in 3 different ways, in rectangles, triangles or cylinders. Make the pastry layers as for bastela "ouarka" (see preparation page 14) measuring 15 × 20 cm (6" × 8") or cut up bastela-size layers to these measurements.

rectangular folding

Put the layer of pastry on the table shiny side down. Spread thinly 1 good teaspoonful of stuffing at the bottom of the layer, 3 cms (1 ¼") from the edge. Fold back the two edges lengthways onto the stuffing so as to form a rectangular strip about 4 cms (1 ½") wide. Fold over and then over again carefully, beginning with the stuffed end of the strip. Lightly flatten the envelope thus formed with the flat of the hand. Put on one side, wrapped in a clean cloth, until it is time to fry.

cylindrical folding

Same method as for the rectangular envelope, but once the two sides of the pastry are folded over the stuffing, roll up the strip, without flattening, like a carpet. Fry at the last moment.

triangular folding

Same method as for preceding two. Once the sides are folded over onto the stuffing, fold and then fold the strip again diagonally and flatten slightly with the palm of the hand. Fry at the last moment.

Briouats

stuffing for kefta "briouats" (type of minced meat, see page 93)

Ingredients for 80 briouats

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of minced meat
100 g (4 oz) of beef fat
1 ouarka pastry layer
15 x 20 cm (6" x 8")
for each envelope
6 eggs
150 g (5 oz) of butter
3 teaspoonfuls of cinnamon

Prepare the minced meat (see kefta in the chapter on grilled dishes) and put in a saucepan with 150 g (5 oz) of butter. Cook, stirring continuously with a spatula. When the meat is cooked and the meat juice completely evaporated, pour the 6 beaten eggs gradually over it stirring all the time and the 3 teaspoonfuls of cinnamon. Go on stirring for 2 or 3 minutes and remove from the heat.

Then fold the briouats as explained above and fry on both sides in boiling oil until golden brown. Serve at once with icing sugar and cinnamon.

rice "briouats"

Ingredients for 60 rice briouats

250 g (9 oz) of polished rice
1/2 litre (1 pt) of milk
100 g (4 oz) of butter
1/2 teaspoonful of salt
4 heaped soupspoonfuls of caster sugar
1 ½ glasses of water
2 soupspoonfuls of orange-flower water
1 ouarka pastry layer 15 × 20 cm (6" × 8") for each envelope
75 g (3 oz) of almonds

Bring the water and milk to the boil. Wash the rice carefully and pour into the boiling liquid. Add butter and salt and leave to cook for 15 minutes, stirring all the time. Add the sugar and the orange-flower water and leave to cook a further 5 to 10 minutes, stirring all the time. Remove from the heat before the rice is completely cooked. Leave to get cold, stirring from time to time. Skin, fry and pound the almonds to a coarse powder. Mix with the rice.

Fold the briouats when the rice is cold, following the directions given at the beginning of the chapter. Fry until golden brown on both sides in boiling oil, then drain and serve with icing sugar and cinnamon.

brain "briouats"

Ingredients for 40 briouats

2 sets of beef brains
1 ouarka pastry layer per envelope 15 × 20 cm (6" × 8")

Clean and wash the brains, taking off the outer membrane. Cook in stock made with salt, pepper, mixed herbs–thyme, bay leaf and parsley–1 onion, 1 turnip, 1 carrot and 1 leek. Boil hard for about 2 hours with the lid on. The brains should be removed from the heat when quite firm. Leave to drain. Cut in slices, dip in beaten egg, then in flour and fry in boiling oil. Cut up. Once the stuffing is cold, fold the briouats following the instructions on page 43, fry in boiling oil and drain.

merguez "briouats"

Use small red sausage (merguez) made with beef and mutton. Roll them in ouarka pastry layers 15 x 20 cm (6" x 8"). Make cylindrical briouats the size of the sausages. Fry in boiling oil, leave to drain, and eat at once with a piquant sauce.

"trid"

Pancakes stuffed with pigeon, chicken or meat.

Ingredients for 6 people

About 20 pancake layers
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of flour
rghaïf dough made without yeast (see preparation page 14)

Stuffing:

1 chicken cut in pieces the size of half a leg, or
4 whole pigeons, cut when cooked or
750 g (1 lb 10 oz) of mutton (shoulder and chops) cut in small pieces
1 level teaspoonful of pepper
1 good pinch of saffron (preferably crushed saffron flower)
6 big grated onions
100 g (4 oz) of butter
1 stick of cinnamon
caster sugar and cinnamon to sprinkle over the top

The "Trid" is a number of large, thin pancakes, made with rghaif batter and stuffed with pigeon, chicken or meat.

These pancakes are not cooked in a frying pan. In bygone days the utensil used was the Qdra dial Trid, a sort of rounded earthenware pot, with a big opening at each end. The embers were placed inside the pot which was laid on its side on supporting stones. If you have not a Qdra dial Trid just use a big saucepan. Place upside down on round barbecue containing embers (braise) and cook the pancakes spread well over the bottom.

Recipe of pancakes for Trid

Knead the Rghaif dough without yeast (see preparation page 14). Roll into balls the size of a tangerine (20 to 25 balls approx.).

Take the first ball that has been rolled, oil a corner of the table or "gsââ" on which to place it. Oil your hands. Stretch this ball out lengthways and sideways and go on pulling it out and stretching until you make a square, the thickness of a sheet of paper. Pick this layer up by the four corners (this will need two people) and lay it out absolutely flat, still stretching it gently, on the Qdra dial Trid or, if one is not available, the upturned saucepan (see method for cooking above).

Cook quickly on both sides and put into the dish when still soft. Stretch out and cook the other balls and pile them up on the dish.

How to cook the stuffing:

Put the chicken, meat or pigeons in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add the grated onions, salt, butter, the stick of cinnamon, pepper and saffron. Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water later if this is necessary.

When the meat, chicken or pigeons are cooked and the flesh comes away from the bones easily, take off the heat and let the onion sauce boil down completely until only the butter can be seen and no liquid is left.
Then put the meat, chicken or pigeons back in the saucepan, leave to simmer for a few minutes while stirring and then take off the heat.
Cut the pigeons in pieces.

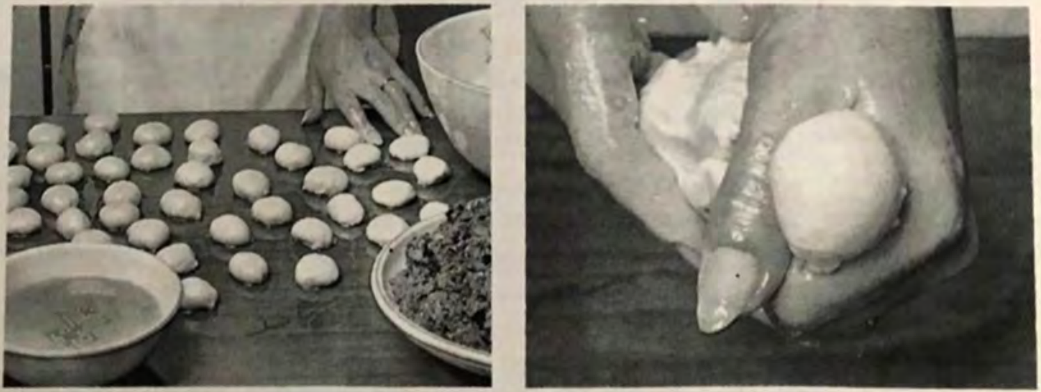
How to serve Trid:
When about to serve, re-heat the stuffing. In a round tajine, arrange a layer of pancake, sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon, cover with a further layer of pancakes. Put half the onion sauce over the pancakes followed by another layer of pancakes which should be sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon. Spread the remainder of the onion sauce and the pieces of meat, chicken or pigeons on top of another layer of pancakes. Cover with a final layer of pancakes. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Heat in a moderate oven with the lid on, for about lo minutes and serve at once.

rghaïf del ferran

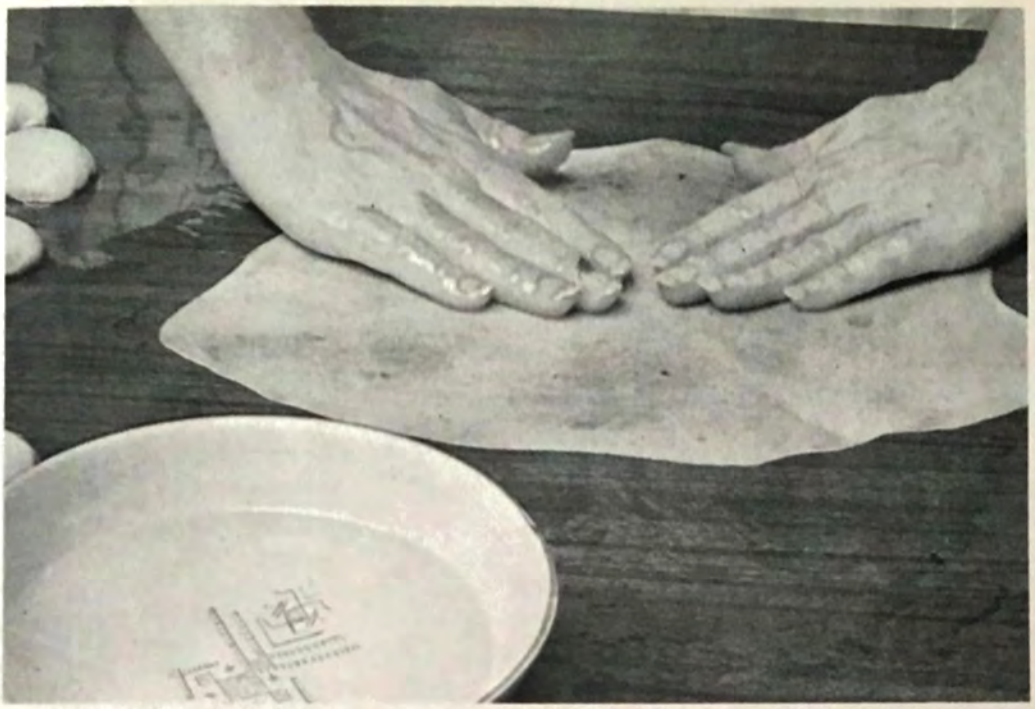
Preparation time: 1 ½ hours
cooking time: about 1/2 hour
Ingredients for about 20 Rghaif
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of flour (see recipe for Rghaif dough)*

Stuffing:
- *1 bowl of chopped parsley*
- *300 g (11 oz) of grated onions with all the moisture squeezed out*
- *100 g (4 oz) of "agrisse" (remains from preparing khlii page 12)*
- *1 soupspoonful heaped with sweet pepper (paprika)*
- *1 level teaspoonful of cumin*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of hot ground pepper (chilli)*

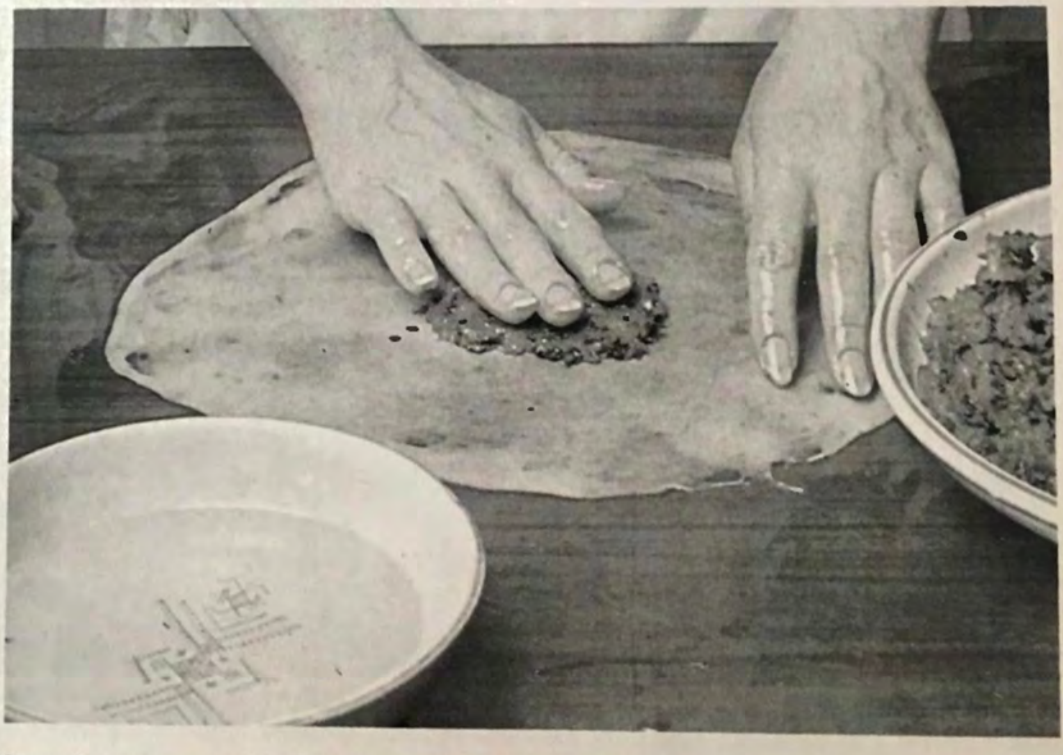
Mix all the ingredients for the stuffing. Prepare the Rghaif dough as described on page 14.



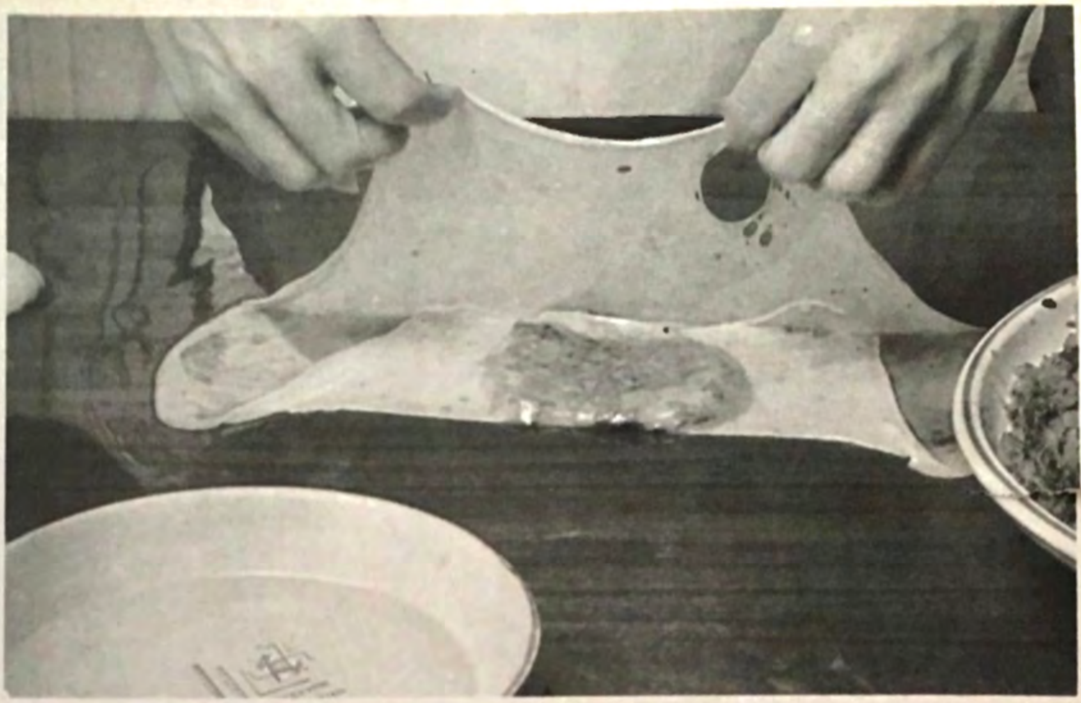
Form about 40 balls of dough the sizeof an apricot and place them on the sligthtly oiled table or "gsââ".



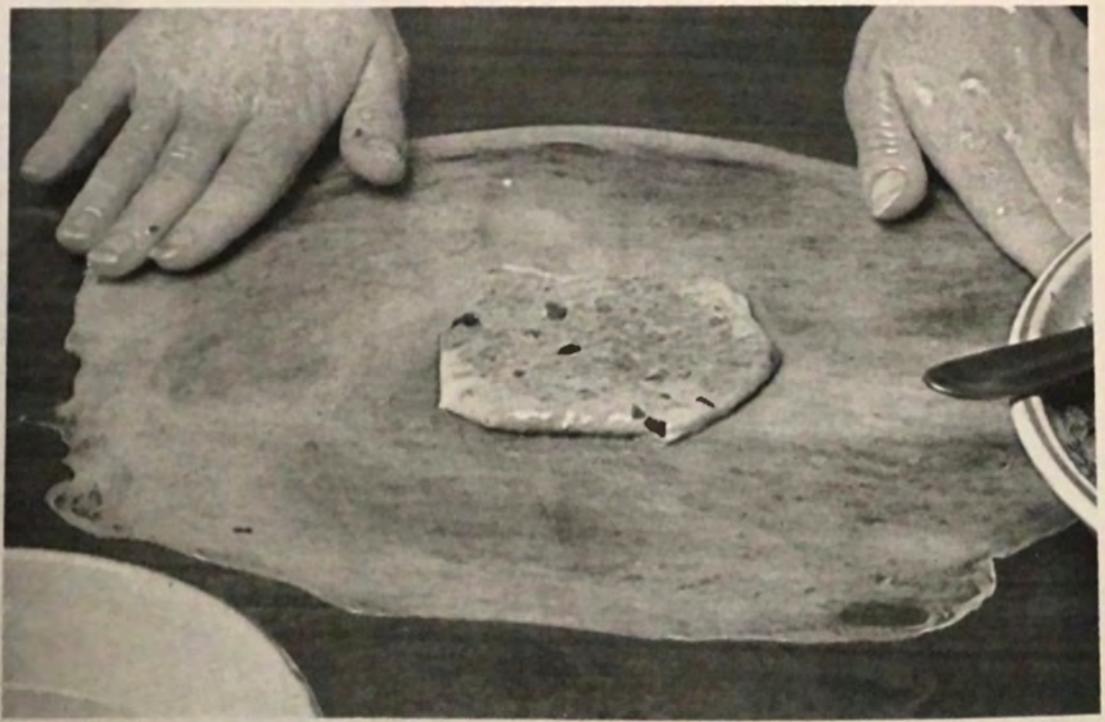
Take the first ball. Flatten and stretch it with the finger tips dipped in oil on the oiled table or "gsâà". Pull out lenthways and sideways to make a square layer of pastry, the thickness of a sheet of paper.



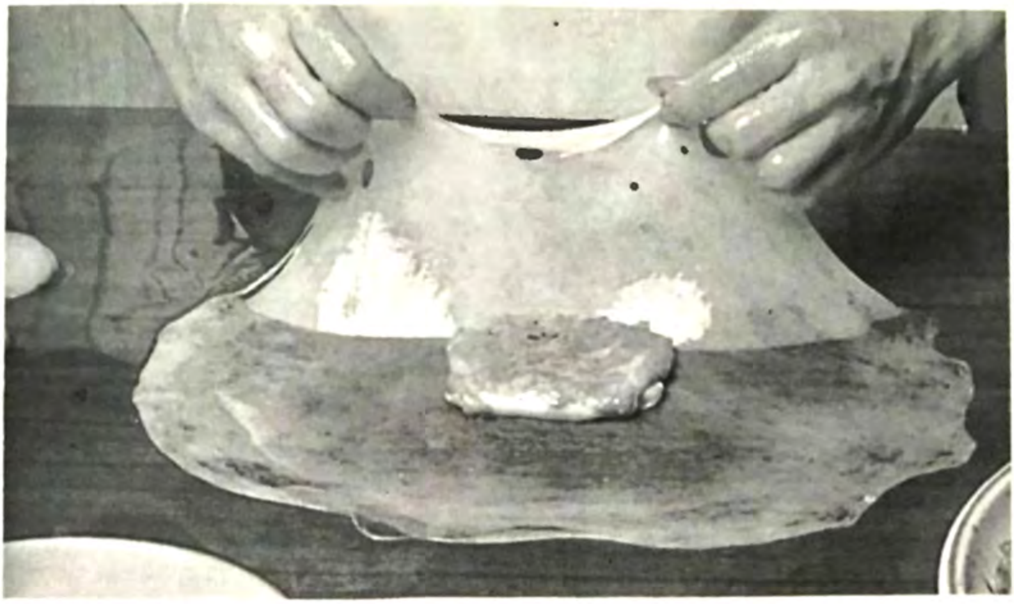
Spread a soupspoonful of stuffing in the middle of this layer.



First fold the layer in three, folding one side over the other, and fold this rectangle in three for form an 8 cm (3") square.



Spread out another ball of dough just as thinly. Put the stuffed square, transparent side upwards in the middle of this new pastry layer.



Fold into a square in the same way this layer on the first one.

Put on a lightly oiled baking sheet. Begin this operation again with the remaining balls, each time putting a stuffed square inside a plain one. Place each one on the baking sheet when ready, leaving a little room between them. Flatten these Rghaif slightly and cook them in a moderately hot oven for about half an hour. Eat very hot as they come out of the oven with mint tea.

If a little oil comes from the Rghaif as they cook, wipe this off the baking sheet so they do not absorb it again, and put them back in the oven until golden brown.

everyday dishes

Delicious stewed dishes are more often prepared in winter. Both economical and savoury they go to make up everyday family fare.

lentils with pumpkins and khlii

Ingredients for 8 people

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of lentils
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of red pumpkin
2 sliced onions
250 g (9 oz) of khlii (see recipe page 12)
2 soupspoonfuls of khlii fat
1 heaped soupspoonful of paprika
crushed chilli to taste or 2 or 3 small hot green peppers.
3 small tomatoes pulped
salt

Put the onions, khlii and khlii fat on to cook in a thick-bottomed saucepan, with the paprika and hot peppers. Cover with 2 litres (4 pts) of water and add sufficient salt, taking into account the fact that the khlii is already salt. Pick over and wash the lentils, par-boil for a few minutes in boiling water, strain and pour immediately into the saucepan of boiling stock.

Take out the pieces of khlii and put on one side. When the lentils are almost cooked, add the pumpkins cut up into cubes and the tomato pulp. Take off the heat as soon as the pumpkins are cooked. Put the pieces of khlii back in the saucepan and add a little water if the sauce is too thick. Serve very hot with the pieces of pumpkin and khlii as a garnish.

"foul gnaoua" with khlii (Guinea beans with dried meat)

Same preparation as preceding recipe for lentils with khlii but omitting the pumpkin.

Lentils with pumpkings and khlii

haricot beans with khlii

Ingredients for 8 people
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of haricot beans soaked overnight

Same preparation as recipe for lentils with khlii put omitting the pumpkin. The beans should be cooked in the stock without first being par-boiled.

haricot beans in sauce (K'dra)

Ingredients for 8 people
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of haricot beans
soaked overnight
2 sliced onions and
1 chopped onion
1 good pinch of saffron
(preferably crushed saffron flowers)
150 g (5 oz) of butter
1 teaspoonful of pepper
1 handful of chopped parsley

Put the haricot beans on to cook with the chopped onion, saffron, butter and pepper. Add salt and cover with water. When the haricot beans are almost cooked, add the 2 sliced onions and a small handful of chopped parsley. Remove from the heat when the onions are cooked but still in whole pieces. If the sauce is too thick add a little water. Serve hot.

kefta meat-balls with eggs

Prepare a 1 lb of kefta (minced meat) as described in the chapter on grills. Form into small balls the size of a child's marbles, wetting the hands often. Cook these balls in 150 g (5 oz) of butter without adding any water. Leave the juice that comes from the kefta to boil down until it is thick and take the saucepan off the heat. If the sauce looks pale, add a small spoonful of paprika. When about to serve, put the meat-balls into a tajin, add a little crushed chilli and heat over a low flame. Then break a few eggs into the dish, well spaced out, sprinkle them with table salt and remove from the heat as soon as the whites are cooked. Serve very hot.

kefta meat-balls with rice (minced meat in sauce)

Ingredients for 8 people
1/2 teaglassful of polished rice
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of kefta (see chapter on grills)
1 onion
1 good pinch of saffron (preferably crushed saffron flowers)
1/2 teaspoonful of pepper
100 g (4 oz) of butter
1 handful of chopped parsley
1/2 teaglassful of lemon juice

Wash the rice and mix with the kefta. Make small balls the size of a child's marbles, wetting the hands from time to time, and toss the balls into a thick-bottomed saucepan as they are made. Place over a medium heat, adding 2 glassfuls of water, the grated onion, saffron, pepper and butter. Add salt and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time.

Kefta meat-balls with eggs

When the rice is cooked, add a handful of chopped parsley and the lemon juice. Leave to simmer for a few minutes and remove from the heat before the sauce thickens. If the rice kefta has been cooked in advance, the sauce is liable to thicken as it cools, the rice having absorbed all the liquid. Add a little water, if this is the case, before re-heating. Serve very hot.

mefta meat-balls with tomatoes

Ingredients for 8 people

3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz) of tomatoes
1 teaspoonful of pepper
1 good pinch of saffron
(preferably crushed saffron flower)
1 grated onion
150 g (5 oz) of butter
crushed chilli to taste
1 handful of chopped parsley

Wash, skin and seed the tomatoes. Cut in pieces but do not pass through a vegetable sieve. Put in a thick-bottomed saucepan, adding salt, pepper, saffron, grated onion, butter and chilli. Leave to boil down, stirring from time to time until the liquid has completely evaporated and fairly thick tomato purée is produced.

While the tomatoes are boiling down, make meat-balls the size of a child's marbles with the kefta and toss them into the tomato sauce when it begins to thicken.

Add the chopped parsley. Bring to the boil and mix. Remove from the heat as soon as the meat-balls are cooked and the tomato sauce is thick. Re-heat, stirring all the time, before serving.

kefta m'chermal meat-balls (minced meat in onion sauce)

Ingredients for 8 people

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of kefta (see chapter on grills)
4 chopped onions
1/2 teaspoonful of ginger
1 good pinch of saffron
(preferably crushed saffron flower)
enough cumin to cover the tip of a knife
1/2 teaspoonful of paprika
crushed chilli to taste
100 g (4 oz) of butter
2 glasses of water
2 soupspoonfuls of chopped parsley and coriander
1/2 teaglassful of lemon juice

Put the finely chopped onions in a saucepan, adding the ginger, saffron, cumin, paprika, crushed chilli and butter. Add salt and cover with 2 glasses of water. When the onions are cooked, tip 1 lb of marble-sized kefta meat-balls into the saucepan, add the very finely chopped parsley and coriander and the lemon juice. Leave to boil down for a few minutes and remove from the heat. Serve very hot.

medfi kababs in butter and sauce

Ingredients for 8 people

1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of kababs

Prepare the kabab as described in the chapter on grills, skewer them and put on one side.

Put 150 g (5 oz) of butter and a glassful of water in a saucepan to cook over a low heat. Add the bits of parsley and chopped onions (chermoula) that fall off the pieces of meat as they are put on skewers. Add a little salt. The kababs are grilled over charcoal embers and the meat should be taken off the skewers as soon as it is done and added to the ingredients in the saucepan. Add 4 soupspoonfuls of vinegar and leave the sauce to reduce until it is creamy. Remove from the heat and serve at once.

medfi kababs with butter and eggs

Prepare the medfi kababs with butter as described above. Put in a tajin to heat gently and break a few eggs, well spaced out. over the kababs. Take off the heat as soon as the whites are cooked and serve immediately.

vegetable marrows with khlii and mlokhia (gumbos)

Ingredients for 6 people

1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of vegetable marrow (if possible round, rough-skinned marrows, called "garâ harcha")
250 g (9 oz) of gumbos
1 onion
200 g (7 oz) of khlii (see recipe page 12)
2 soupspoonfuls of khlii fat
1 heaped teaspoonful of paprika
crushed chilli to taste
1 soupspoonful of gumbos powder if no fresh ones are available

Slice the onion thinly and put in a saucepan with the khlii fat, the pieces of khlii, paprika, pounded chilli and enough salt, taking into account that the khlii is salted. Cover with 2 glassfuls of water. Bring to the boil, cut the marrows into 4 lengthways, take out the pips but leave the skin and cut into pieces 2 or 3 cm (1" or 1 ¼") long. Rinse and turn into the boiling stock. Remove the pieces of khlii and put on one side. Top and tail the gumbos, rinse quickly and put in a separate saucepan. Add salt and cook in a little of the marrow stock. (Never leave the gumbos wet for long. They have to be cooked immediately after they are washed or they will be gluey.)

Leave the marrows to cook very gently until the liquid is thick and creamy. Serve hot with the gumbos and khlii on top of the marrows.

(slaouia) marrows with khlii and mlokhia (gumbos)

The slaouia marrow is long and shaped like a small pitcher and is pale green without any veins.
Scrape with a knife to remove all the green skin and prepare as the recipe for vegetable marrows with khlii and gumbos.

tomatoes with khlii and potatoes

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people
5 kg (11 lbs) of tomatoes
200 g (7 oz) of khlii (see recipe page 12)
4 soupspoonfuls of khlii fat
2 chopped onions
1 heaped soupspoonful of paprika
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of potatoes
1 handful of chopped parsley
chilli to taste

Wash and peel the tomatoes. Take out the seeds and chop into pieces. (Never put tomatoes through a vegetable sieve.) Put on to cook in a thick-bottomed saucepan without adding any water. Add salt, 2 chopped onions, the dried meat, khlii fat, paprika and the crushed chilli.
Peel and cut up into small pieces 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of potatoes. Put on one side. When the tomato mixture has been boiling for a few minutes, take out the pieces of khlii and put on one side. Take out a little of the tomato juice and cook the potatoes in it separately adding a very little salt.
Keep a close watch on the tomatoes, stirring frequently, until all the juice has evaporated and the fat separates from the rest. A sort of tomato purée is produced. Add the chopped parsley and the pieces of khlii which were put on one side and the potatoes which were cooked separately. Stir for a few more minutes and remove from the heat. Serve very hot.

tomatoes with kklii and quinces

This is prepared in the same way as tomatoes with khlii and potatoes. Replace the potatoes with 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of quinces, cut into quarters but not peeled.

tomatoes with khlii and "mlokhia" (gumbos)

The preparation is the same as for tomatoes with khlii and potatoes. Top and tail the gumbos and rinse at the very last moment before putting them on to cook in a little tomato juice with salt added. Serve separately or on top of the piping hot tomatoes.

dried bones

For recipes for tomatoes and couscous with dried bones.
Use beef or mutton bones which still have a little meat on them. Wash and rub all over with cooking salt. Leave on one side until the next day, then put out to dry in the sun 5 or 6 days running. Take in at night to avoid the damp air.
These bones are used to prepare tomato tajine and a variety of couscous dishes. They can be kept for about 30 days before using if they are really dry.

(slaouia) marrows with khlii and mlokhia (gumbos)

The slaouia marrow is long and shaped like a small pitcher and is pale green without any veins.

Scrape with a knife to remove all the green skin and prepare as the recipe for vegetable marrows with khlii and gumbos.

tomatoes with khlii and potatoes

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

5 kg (11 lbs) of tomatoes
200 g (7 oz) of khlii (see recipe page 12)
4 soupspoonfuls of khlii fat
2 chopped onions
1 heaped soupspoonful of paprika
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of potatoes
1 handful of chopped parsley
chilli to taste

Wash and peel the tomatoes. Take out the seeds and chop into pieces. (Never put tomatoes through a vegetable sieve.) Put on to cook in a thick-bottomed saucepan without adding any water. Add salt, 2 chopped onions, the dried meat, khlii fat, paprika and the crushed chilli.

Peel and cut up into small pieces 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of potatoes. Put on one side. When the tomato mixture has been boiling for a few minutes, take out the pieces of khlii and put on one side. Take out a little of the tomato juice and cook the potatoes in it separately adding a very little salt.

Keep a close watch on the tomatoes, stirring frequently, until all the juice has evaporated and the fat separates from the rest. A sort of tomato purée is produced. Add the chopped parsley and the pieces of khlii which were put on one side and the potatoes which were cooked separately. Stir for a few more minutes and remove from the heat. Serve very hot.

tomatoes with kklii and quinces

This is prepared in the same way as tomatoes with khlii and potatoes. Replace the potatoes with 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of quinces, cut into quarters but not peeled.

tomatoes with khlii and "mlokhia" (gumbos)

The preparation is the same as for tomatoes with khlii and potatoes. Top and tail the gumbos and rinse at the very last moment before putting them on to cook in a little tomato juice with salt added. Serve separately or on top of the piping hot tomatoes.

dried bones

For recipes for tomatoes and couscous with dried bones.

Use beef or mutton bones which still have a little meat on them. Wash and rub all over with cooking salt. Leave on one side until the next day, then put out to dry in the sun 5 or 6 days running. Take in at night to avoid the damp air.

These bones are used to prepare tomato tajine and a variety of couscous dishes. They can be kept for about 30 days before using if they are really dry.

dry-bone tomatoes

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

- *5 kg (11 lbs) of tomatoes*
- *6 or 7 dried bones*
- *1 soupspoonful of sweet pepper (paprika)*
- *2 chopped or sliced onions*
- *hot peppers (chillies) to taste*
- *1 ladle of groundnut oil*

Wash, skin and seed the tomatoes. Cut into pieces. (Never pass through a vegetable sieve.) Put on to cook with the onions, paprika, chilli and oil. Add the bones after careful washing (change the water several times). Do not add salt. Leave to cook, stirring frequently to avoid anything sticking to the bottom of the saucepan, until there is no more liquid and the tomatoes form a thick purée. Add the chopped parsley, leave to cook again for a few minutes until the oil separates from the tomatoes. Check the seasoning and remove from the heat. Re-heat at the time of serving. taking care the tomatoes do not burn.

mezgueldi (onions with khlii)

Ingredients for 8 people

Cut 4 kg (9 lbs) of onions into rings, boil and drain by pressing them. Put them into a saucepan with 250 g (9 oz) of khlii (dried meat, see recipe page 12) 3 soupspoonful of khlii fat, a heaped teaspoonful of paprika and crushed chilli to taste. Add salt. Allow to boil down until there is nos liquid left and add half a teaglassful of lemon juice, and a bunch of chopped parsley. Leave a few more minutes and then remove from the heat and serve very hot.

khlii with lemon

Ingredients for 6 people

- *300 g (11 oz) approx. of khlii (see recipe page 12)*
- *1 spoonful of khlii fat*
- *a few broken olives (meslalla) if in season*
- *1 soupspoonful of paprika*
- *1 teaspoonful of cumin*
- *crushed chilli to taste*
- *the juice of 2 lemons*
- *1 handful of chopped parsley*

Cut the khlii into dice with a pair of scissors. Put in the tajin, adding the khlii fat and a teaglassful of water. Put on the heat and add a few stoned broken olives, if in season. Add a soupspoonful of paprika, cumin, chilli and, when it comes to the boil, add the lemon juice and chopped parsley. Mix well, bring to the boil, leave a few minutes, then remove from the heat and serve at once with mint tea.

khlii with eggs

Cut a few strips of khlii into small pieces with a pair of scissors and put them in the tajin. Add a small spoonful of khlii fat and cook over a low heat. When the fat melts, crack a few eggs and space them out in the tajin. Remove from the heat as soon as the whites are cooked. Serve piping hot with mint tea.

bessara (dried kidney-bean purée)

Ingredients for 6 people

Wash and clean 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of dried, skinned kidney-beans. Put on the heat with two cloves of garlic, 1 level teaspoonful of salt and 1 ½ litre (3 pints) of water. Leave to cook, stirring from time to time, then pass through a vegetable sieve. Add a little water if the purée is too thick. It should normally spread itself out over the dish when poured out. Heat well before serving. Pour into a heated dish, sprinkle with paprika, cumin and pounded chilli. Serve separately olive oil, lemon juice and a bunch of spices consisting of paprika, cumin and chilli. Each person should season his helping as he wishes.

serrouda (chick-pea purée)

Ingredients for 6 people

Put 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of chick-peas to soak overnight in hot water. The next day peel and wash them and then cook in 1 1/2 litre (3 pts) of water. Add salt. 1/2 teaspoonful of pepper, a good pinch of saffron and a sliced onion. Leave to cook gently, stirring from time to time. Pass through a vegetable sieve.

Re-heat just before serving and add a little water if it is too thick. It should be of the right consistency to be eaten with a spoon. Add a little melted butter on serving.

fish

Whiting, "pageots", mullet, sea bream and shads are the most commonly used fish in Moroccan cooking.

However sea-perch, red mullet, dorados, sword-fish, etc., can be used.

The recipes given are applicable to all the above-mentioned fish. Shads, sea bream, whiting, mullet, etc. can also be fried, stewed in tomatoes, cooked in the oven or "Mqualli in tajine".

All these fish can, no matter how they are cooked, be marinaded first for a few hours in a marinade called "chermoula".

chermoula or marinade for fish

Quantities for 3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz) of fish. Use more or less according to the amount of fish to be cooked.

Stalk, wash and crush a large bunch of coriander with salt either in a morta (mehraz) or in an electric mixer with 1/2 glassful of water, 3 or 4 crushed cloves of garlic and enough salt for the seasoning. Then add the following to the crushed coriander.

1/2 teaglassful of water
2 soupspoonfuls of paprika
1 soupspoonful of cumin
1/2 teaspoonful of crushed chilli
2 soupspoonfuls of oil

(For shads add 1/2 a teaglassful of vinegar.) Mix all the ingredients and leave the fish to marinade for a few hours.

shad

The fresh water variety of shad is a very bony fish with fatty flesh. It is one of the favourite fishes in Morocco, particularly the female because of its roe.

fried shad

Choose a female shad weighing at least 3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz). (The small ones are no good.) Clean the inside being careful not to crush the roe. Take off the heat and the tail and cut the fish in half lengthways.

Then cut the two halves in slices 5 or 6 cm (2" to 2 ¼") wide. Wash several times in salt water, rinse carefully and leave to drain.

Marinade these slices in the chermoula (see preparation) for several hours. Then roll the slices (and also the roe) in hard wheat flour. Keep the remainder of the chermoula for making fritters.

Fry the fish in boiling oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, taking care to brown them all over.

Eat either hot or cold. This fish can be kept 1 or 2 days in its marinade before being cooked. Whiting, sea bream, dorados, mullet, pageots, etc. can also be fried after marinading in the same way.

baked fish

Cooking time: 1 ¼ hours (approx).

Choose a fish such a pageot, dorado or sea-perch, weighing about 3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz). Clean inside, wash in salt water, make a small cut along the back (so that the marinade can get in) and leave for several hours in the chermoula (see prepraration page 59).

1 1/2 hour before the meal, thinly slice 1 1/2 kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of potatoes and spread them on the bottom of a fireproof dish with the fish on top. Wash and seed 2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of tomatoes and keep the juice. Put the sliced tomatoes on top of the fish and around it. Add 3 or 4 sweet peppers, grilled and cut in two lengthways, and 2 or 3 small hot peppers which should be left whole. Pour the remainder of the chermoula on the fish, together with the tomato juice and 3/4 of a ladleful of groundnut oil.

Sprinkle with salt, chopped parsley and pepper.

Cook in a moderately hot oven, basting with the juices in the dish from time to time. When the fish is almost cooked, pour the juice into a saucepan and boil down on top of the stove until it becomes sticky. Serve piping hot with the sauce.

N.B. It is now usual to sprinkle grated gruyère cheese and toasted bread crumbs over the tomatoes so that they do not burn and their skins remain golden brown and crusty.

fish in mqualli tajine

Whiting, pageots, mullet, dorados, sea-bream and shads can be cooked this way. According to their size, they are either cut in slices or left whole (whiting and small sea-bream).

Ingredients for 2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of fish
Marinade the fish for a few hours in the chermoula (see recipe page 59)
Meanwhile, prepare a sauce with the following:

- *1 teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1 good pinch of saffron (crushed saffron flowers)*
- *3/4 of a ladle of groundnut oil*
- *1 soupspoonful of chermoula*
- *1 pickled lemon cut in quarters* } *at the end of the cooking*
- *6 or 7 preserved olives* }

Mix all the ingredients together. Put a few pieces of reed cut in 4 lengthways, on the bottom of the tajin so that the fish cannot stick to the bottom. Place the fish on top and pour the sauce over. Cover and leave to simmer a few minutes, slightly off the heat. Then cook for 30 minutes in a slow oven. Take it out of the oven and check the seasoning and see if the fish is done. If the sauce is too thin, let boil down, without the lid on, over a moderate heat until it thickens to the right consistency. Serve piping hot.

This dish can be prepared more easily in a thick-bottomed saucepan. When the sauce has simmered for a few minutes, cook the pieces of marinaded fish in it, taking care to turn them over gently without breaking them, so that they are cooked on both sides. Boil the sauce down to the right consistency and serve in a round dish, garnished with preserved olives and pickled lemon.

fritters made from fish marinade

Take the pieces of fish out of the marinade, dip them in flour and fry them. Prepare the fritter batter in advance and leave it to stand while the fish is being fried.

Add a beaten egg to the chermoula and a piece of yeast the size of a large walnut mixed with a little water. Mix hard wheat flour into this, beating it in gradually until you have a slightly thinner batter than is usual for fritters.

Allow about one soup bowl of flour for a chermoula prepared for 3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz) of fish. Cover this batter and leave to stand. When the fish has been fried, change the oil that has been used, and bring the new oil to the boil. Pour spoonfuls of batter in it, sufficiently spaced out so that they do not touch.

Fry the fritters on both sides over a moderate heat and drain.

A kind of flat, round fritter with bubbles on one side is made and it should be served round the fish.

fish stuffed with rice

Ingredients for a pageot weighing 3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz)

1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of tomatoes
200 g (7 oz) of green stoned olives
2 pickled lemons (zest only)
1 teaglassful three-quarters full of polished rice
200 g (7 oz) of butter
2 hot peppers (chillies)— optional

Cooking time in oven: about 1 ¼ hours

Clean, wash and drain the fish. Marinade for a few hours in the chermoula (see recipe page 59).

Par-boil the rice for 3 minutes in boiling salt water. Peel and seed the tomatoes, dice them, keep the juice on one side, cut the olives and zest of the pickled lemons into very small pieces.

Mix the tomatoes, olives and pickled lemons with the chermoula. Add the par-boiled rice to half this mixture and put the other half on one side.

Fritters made from fish marinade

Add 100 g (4 oz) of unmelted butter to this mixture and stuff the fish with it, first making an incision along its belly. Sew up the opening. Put the fish in an oven-proof dish and cover it with the remainder of the olives, lemons and tomatoes. Put the remaining 100 g (4 oz) of butter on top and pour a teaglassful of water and the tomato juice over.

(If liked, add 2 small, whole chillies.)

Cook in a hot oven, basting the fish with the sauce from time to time, for about 1 ¼ hours. Serve immediately.

fish with tomato

Whiting, pageots, mullet, etc. Ingredients for 2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of fish, whole or sliced, according to their size.

Leave the fish to marinade several hours in the chermoula (see recipe) and put on one side.

Wash, skin and seed 2 ½ kg (5 lbs 8 oz) of tomatoes, cut up and put in a saucepan.

Add:

1 teaspoonful of ginger
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (preferably crushed saffron flowers)
1/2 teaspoonful of ground chilli
1 crushed garlic clove
4 soupspoonfuls of chermoula
3/4 of a ladle of groundnut oil
a little salt
1 pickled lemon
6 or 7 olives } *to be added after cooking*
1 handful of chopped parsley } *the tomato*

Cook on a moderate heat, stirring often to prevent the tomato sticking to the bottom of the saucepan. When all the liquid has evaporated the tomato will have become a purée. Then add a handful of chopped parsley, the zest of a pickled lemon cut in pieces and 6 or 7 preserved olives. Leave to cook a little longer whilst stirring continuously.

Put a few pieces of reed cut in 4 lengthways in the bottom of a tajin, then place the pieces of fish on the reeds which will stop them from touching the bottom and becoming burnt. Pour the remaining chermoula and the tomato purée over the fish. Decorate with the pickled lemon and olives. Cover and leave to simmer for a few minutes on top of the stove. Then put in a fairly hot oven, with the lid on, for about 45 minutes.

If the sauce is too thin, pour it into a saucepan and boil it down until it thickens. Add a spoonful of flour mixed with a little water to bind and bring to the boil. Pour the sauce into the tajin and eat hot or cold.

The fish can also be cooked in the thick-bottomed saucepan on top of the tomato purée, taking care to lower the heat and to turn the fish over gently without breaking it. When cooked this way, serve in a dish, with the fish on top of the tomatoes.

poultry

choosing a chicken

It is most important to know how to choose chickens. Young, cereal-fed birds should only be used if nothing else is available.

As they cook too quickly, they cannot be simmered long enough in the sauce to be entirely impregnated by it.

The best solution is to buy ordinary farm chickens which have not been fed in any special way, weighing about 3 pounds.

cleaning a chicken

The chicken should have its throat cut while still alive and be dipped quickly into very hot, almost boiling, water.

Take out after a few minutes and pluck firmly, then clean the inside and was thoroughly several times in warm water. Rub hard with cooking salt and rinse, changing the water several times. The offal should be cleaned and washed in the same way.

After washing, put the chicken and offal in a bucket of cold, slightly salt, water, keep in a cool place for a few hours and rinse again before cooking. Turkey, pigeon, young partridge, etc., are prepared in the same way.

k'dra chicken with chick-peas and onions

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing about 3 lbs each (see choosing and cleaning a chicken, page 65)

1 glassful of chick-peas soaked overnight and peeled the next day
1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of onions
1 handful of chopped parsley
200 g (7 oz) of butter
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers)
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
salt

Cut the chicken in pieces and put them in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal. Add salt, pepper, saffron, butter, 2 sliced onions, and the peeled chick-peas. Cover with 2 big glassfuls of water.

Cover with a lid and cook over a moderate heat, turning over from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When the chickens are cooked, i.e. their flesh comes off the bones easily in the fingers, taken them out of the sauce to which should be added the remainder of the sliced onions, the chopped parsley, a little salt and a pinch of saffron. Shake the saucepan to mix well.

When the onions are cooked but still firm, check the seasoning and take the saucepan off the heat. Put the chickens back into the sauce with the onions for a moment to re-heat, then arrange them on a dish with the onions and chick-peas on top and serve at once.

N.B. The k'dra sauce is not so thick as the Mqualli.

k'dra chicken with almonds and onions

Same quantities as for recipe for chickens with chick-peas and onions given above. Replace the chick-peas with 200 g (7 oz) of peeled almonds which should be cooked with the chickens.

"m'chermel" k'dra chicken

Ingredients sufficient for 2 three-pound chickens (see choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65)

4 grated onions
1/2 teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed prepared packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers)
200 g (7 oz) of butter
1 soupspoonful of chopped coriander and parsley
1/2 teaspoonful of cumin
1 heaped teaspoonful of paprika
1/teaglassful of lemon juice
salt

The chickens can be cut in pieces or left whole (according to taste). Put them in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal, 4 grated onions, butter, pepper, salt, saffron and 2 glassfuls of water. Cook with the lid on over a moderate heat. Turn the chicken over now and then, so that it is well impregnated with the sauce and add a little extra water if necessary.

When the chickens are almost cooked, add the paprika, cumin, chopped coriander and parsley. Mix together and when the chicken is quite done, i.e. the flesh comes away from the bones easily in the fingers, add the lemon juice. Leave to simmer a few more minutes until the sauce is thick. Remove from the heat.

Arrange the chicken on a dish with the offal, lemon zest and olives on top, and pour the sauce over.

"m'chermel tajin" chicken

Ingredients for 2 three-pound chickens (see choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65)
4 grated onions
1 teaspoonful of ginger
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed prepared packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers) – 1 ladleful of groundnut oil
1 teaspoonful of coriander and parsley (chopped)
1/2 teaspoonful of cumin
1 heaped teaspoonful of paprika
1/2 teaglassful of lemon juice
the zest of a pickled lemon
10 preserved olives
salt

The chickens can be cut in pieces or left whole (according to taste). Put them in a thick-bottomed saucepan with their offal, the grated onions, oil, saffron, ginger, and 2 glassfuls of water. Add salt, cook with the lid on over a moderate heat. Stir, when it comes to the boil, turning the chickens over from time to time so that they are well impregnated with the sauce. Add a little water if necessary as they cook. When they are almost cooked, add the paprika, cumin and the chopped parsley and coriander. Add the olives and the pickled lemon zest cut in quarters. Mix well. When the chicken is completely cooked, i.e. the flesh leaves the bones easily, add the lemon juice. Leave to simmer a few minutes more to reduce the sauce and when it is of the right consistency, remove from the heat. Arrange the chicken on a round dish with the offall, lemon zest and olives on top, and pour the sauce over.

steamed chicken stuffed with parsley

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing about 3 lbs each (see choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65)
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of tomatoes
2 bowls brimful of chopped parsley
2 sticks of celery (chopped)
the zest of 1 pickled lemon
1/2 teaspoonful of ground chilli
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
2 pieces of butter the size of a walnut
salt
cumin

Finely chop the parsley, celery and zest of pickled lemon. Mix with the tomatoes which have been peeled, seeded and cut into pieces. Add the salt, pepper and chilli.

Put this stuffing, together with a knob of butter the size of a walnut, in each chicken. Put the chickens in the upper part of a couscous steamer with 3 to 4 litres (5 to 7 pts)

of boiling water in the bottom part. Make the steamer airtight by binding the join between the two parts with a cloth steeped in flour and water. Place a clean damp cloth over the chickens and put the lid on the steamer. Cook over a moderate heat.
Check after 1 ½ hours and if the flesh comes off the bones easily, take off the heat.
Arrange on a dish and serve at once, accompanied by a mixture of salt and cumin served separately on each plate.

steamed chicken stuffed with rice

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing 3 lbs each (for choosing and cleaning a chicken see page 65)

1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of tomatoes
1 small bunch of chopped parsley
2 pickled lemons
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1/2 teaspoonful of ground chilli
1 full glass of polished rice
100 g (4 oz) of butter
salt
cumin

Wash and drain the rice. Peel, seed and cut up the tomatoes. Chop the parsley and cut, the zest of the pickled lemons as fine as the parsley. Add salt, pepper and chilli and mix up all the ingredients.
Put this stuffing and 50 g (2 oz) of butter inside each chicken. Put them in the upper part of the couscous steamer over the lower part containing 3 to 4 litres (5 to 7 pts) of boiling water. Bind the 2 parts with a strip of material steeped in flour and water. Cover the chickens with a clean damp cloth and put the lid on. Leave to cook over a moderate heat. About 1 ½ hours later check if the chickens are done by seeing if the flesh comes away from the bones easily in the fingers. Remove from the heat. Arrange on a dish and serve with a separate small dish with a mixture of salt and cumin.

"m'hammer choua kder" chicken

Ingredients for 2 three-pound chickens (see choosing a chicken and cleaning a chicken page 65)

1/2 teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixture of prepared packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers)
2 grated onions
1 teaspoonful of ginger
1 small bunch of coriander tied together
150 g (5 oz) butter
salt

Put the chickens (whole) in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal. Cover with 2 glassfuls of water. Add salt, grated onion, pepper, saffron, ginger, butter and the bunch of coriander which should be removed when the chickens are cooked.

Cook with the lid on over a moderate heat, turning over from time to time so that the chicken is well impregnated with the sauce. Add a little extra water if necessary. When the chickens are quite done, i.e. the flesh comes away from the bones easily in the fingers, check the seasoning. Allow the sauce to boil down until it is of the right consistency and remove from the heat.

20 minutes before serving, heat 100 g (4 oz) of butter in a pan, together with a ladleful of oil. Fry the chickens in this fat, browning them all over.

Arrange the chicken on a hot dish. Re-heat the sauce without letting to boil away and add 2 soupspoonfuls of the fat in which the chickens were fried, stirring the saucepan with a circular movement. Pour the sauce over the chickens and serve at once.

m'hammer chicken fried with parsley

Ingredients for 2 three-pound chickens (see choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65)

2 grated onions
1 teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron
(mixed packet saffron and
crushed saffron flowers)

150 g (5 oz) of butter
2 soupspoonfuls of chopped parsley
the zest of one pickled lemon
the juice of one lemon
salt

Put the whole chickens in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal. Cover with 2 big glassfuls of water. Add salt, grated onion, pepper, saffron, butter and a soupspoonful of chopped parsley.

Cook with the lid on over a moderate heat, turning the chickens over from time to time so that they become impregnated with the sauce. Add a little extra water if necessary. When the chickens are almost cooked, mash up half the liver from one chicken with a little sauce, either in an electric mixer or in a vegetable sieve, using the finest grille. Put this in the saucepan with the chickens, together with the second soupspoonful of chopped parsley. Chop up the lemon zest into tiny pieces, almost as fine as the chopped parsley.

When the chickens are cooked, i.e. the flesh comes away from the bones easily between the fingers, add the chopped zest and the lemon juice. Leave to boil down gently until the sauce is rich and creamy and remove from the heat after checking the seasoning.

20 minutes before serving, heat 100 g (4 oz) of butter and a ladleful of oil in a frying pan. Fry the chickens in this fat, turning them over to brown nicely all over.

Arrange the chicken on a hot dish and re-heat the sauce without letting it boil away. Add 2 soupspoonfuls of the frying fat to the sauce, mixing it well, stirring the saucepan with a circular mouvement, and pour this rather sticky sauce over the chickens. Serve at once.

fried m'hammer chicken (traditional)

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing about 3 lbs each (see choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65)

1 heaped soupspoonful of paprika
1 level teaspoonful of cumin
2 crushed garlic cloves
1 small whole onion
150 g (5 oz) of butter
1 small bunch of coriander tied together
1 teaspoonful of flour

Put the whole chickens in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal. Cover with 2 big glassfuls of water, add salt, butter, crushed garlic, whole onion, paprika, cumin and the small bunch of coriander which should be removed when the chicken is cooked. Cook with the lid on over a moderate heat, turning the chickens over from time to time so that they are well impregnated with the sauce. Add water if necessary. Take the onion out as soon as it is cooked and put on one side.

When the chickens are cooked, i.e. the flesh comes away from the bones easily between the fingers, mash the onion with a small piece of chicken liver either in an electric blender or in a vegetable sieve. Mix a teaspoonful of flour with the liver and onion and then add this to the saucepan. Check the seasoning and remove the saucepan from the heat as soon as the sauce has thickened.

20 minutes before serving, heat 100 g (4 oz) of butter and a ladleful of oil in a pan and fry the chickens golden brown all over.

Arrange on a hot dish. Re-heat the chicken sauce without letting it boil away. Add 2 soupspoonfuls of the frying fat, stirring the saucepan with a circular stirring movement and pour over the chicken. Serve at once.

N.B. The onion is optional and is not included in the traditional recipe.

chicken "mechoui" (broiled over a charcoal fire)

Ingredients sufficient for 2 three-pound chickens (see choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65)
Same quantities as for the M'Hammer chicken

Cook the chickens in the same way as the recipe for M'Hammer chicken prepared the traditional way but without the onion and coriander. Once the chickens are cooked, leave to cool and spread with the following mixture:

1 soupspoonful of paprika
1 level teaspoonful of cumin
1 good pinch of ground chilli
50 g (2 oz) of melted butter
salt

When almost ready to eat, grill over charcoal embers but be careful to place a grille on the barbecue. Serve as soon as the chickens are well grilled.

Fried m'hammer chicken (traditional recipe)

m'hammer chicken (alternative preparation)

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing about 3 lbs each (see choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65)

- *1 garlic clove*
- *1 onion*
- *1 teaspoonful of paprika*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of pepper*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of cumin*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers)*
- *150 g (5 oz) of butter*
- *2 soupspoonfuls of groundnut oil*
- *1 small bunch of parsley and coriander tied together*
- *1 teaspoonful of flour*
- *salt*

Peel the onion and the garlic. Pound up very fine in a mortar with enough salt to season the chicken. Mix this with the spices listed above. Drain the chickens and wipe them with a clean cloth, and spread this mixture inside and out.

But butter and oil in the thick-bottomed saucepan on a low heat and lightly fry the chicken, turning them over so that they are well impregnated with the spices. After a few minutes add 2 big glassfuls of water and add the little bunch of parsley and coriander which should be removed when the chickens are cooked.

Cook with the lid on over a moderate heat, turning the chickens frequently. Add a little water if necessary.

When the chickens are cooked, i.e. the flesh comes away from the bones easily between the fingers, let the sauce boil down, if necessary and remove them from the heat Add the flour blended with a little water and bring the sauce to the boil. Stir quickly, let it boil down further and take off the heat.

20 minutes before serving, heat 100 g (4 oz) of butter and a ladleful of oil in a pan and carefully fry the chickens so that they are nicely browned all over.

Arrange on a hot dish. Re-heat the chicken sauce without letting it boil away. Add two soupspoonfuls of the frying fat, stirring with a circular movement, and pour the sauce over the chickens. Serve immediately.

chicken "mqualli" with pickled lemon

Ingredients for 2 chickens each weighing 3 pounds (see choosing a chicken and cleaning method (page 65)

- *1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed prepared packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers)*
- *3/4 ladle of groundnut oil*
- *50 g (2 oz) of butter*
- *1 soupspoonful of olive oil*
- *1 small whole onion*
- *the zest of 1 pickled lemon cut in quarters*
- *10 preserved olives*
- *salt*

Chicken « mqualli » with pickled lemon

Put the chickens, whole or cut into pieces, in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal. Add salt, oil, butter, ginger, the whole onion, crushed garlic, saffron and two glassfuls of water.

Put on the heat, cover and when it comes to the boil, turn the pieces of chicken over, stir to mix the spices and leave to cook on a moderate heat. Make sure the sauce does not boil away and add a little water if necessary. Turn the pieces over frequently so that they are completely impregnated with the sauce. Take the onion out as soon as it is cooked and put on one side.

When the chicken is cooked, i.e. the flesh comes away from the bones easily in the fingers, add the olives and lemon zest, cut into pieces.

Allow to simmer a few more minutes. Check the seasoning.

Take a little piece of the chicken liver and the onion and either sieve or blend in an electric mixer.

Add the sauce and bring to the boil. Serve as soon as the sauce is the right consistency. Arrange the pieces of chicken and offal with the pickled lemon zest and the olives on a round dish. Stir the sauce hard with a circular movement and pour this thick, rich sauce over the dish. Serve very hot.

N.B. The onion is optional. It is not included in the traditional recipe.

chicken "mqualli" with pickled lemon (alternative preparation)

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing about 3 pounds each. (See choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65.)

1 teaspoonful of ginger
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (prepared packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers mixed)
1 ladleful of groundnut oil
1 soupspoonful of olive oil
2 sliced onions
1 crushed garlic clove
the zest of a pickled lemon, cut in quarters
10 preserved olives

Cook the chickens, whole or in pieces, with the lid on, after having added the oil. onion, garlic, salt, spices, 2 glassfuls of water and the offal. When the chicken is nearly cooked, add the pickled lemons cut up in quarters and the preserved olives.

Let the sauce boil down to a rich consistency and then take off the heat. Arrange the chicken on a hot dish with the pickled lemon, olives and offal on top, and pour the sauce over.

(See instructions for cooking the chicken in the first recipe for chicken Mqualli')

chicken with fried aubergines

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing about 3 lbs (see choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65)

3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz) of aubergines
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers)
3/4 ladle of groundnut oil
1 crushed clove of garlic
1/2 teaglassful of lemon juice (for the chickens)
1/2 to 1 glassful of lemon juice (for the aubergines)
salt
1 teaspoonful of flour

Wash the aubergines, tail them divide in halves and put them in salt water. Peel the aubergines lengthways keeping strips of skin, about 2 cm (1") wide, on them. Cut into rounds 2 cm (1") thick. Spread them out on a dish, sprinkling table salt on them as they are cut so that they do not discolour.

Fry these rings in boiling oil on both sides, drain and put on one side. Cut the chicken into pieces, put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal. Add salt, garlic, saffron, ginger and oil and cover with two big glassfuls of water.

Cook with the lid on over a moderate heat, turning over from time to time.

Add water during cooking if necessary. When the chickens are cooked, i.e. their flesh comes away from the bones easily in the fingers, take off the heat. Drain the tails of the aubergines and put them into the saucepan which is still on the heat. Add a little water to the reduced sauce so that they do not discolour. When cooked, add 1/2 glassful of lemon juice and a teaspoonful of flour, mixed with a little water to thicken the sauce. Bring to the boil, check the seasoning and remove the aubergines from the saucepan when the sauce has thickened.

Put the aubergines in a frying pan, mash up, frying over the heat, then strain, pressing out the superfluous oil. Put the frying pan back on the heat. Add 1/2 to 1 teaglassful of lemon juice to taste, mix well, check the seasoning and take off the heat.

Arrange the re-heated chickens with the aubergines on top in a dish. Pour the sauce over and serve very hot.

chicken with carrots

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing about 3 lbs each (see choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65)

3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz) of carrots
1 ½ ladleful of oil
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers)
1 crushed garlic clove
1 handful of chopped parsley
1 teaglassful of lemon juice
15 preserved olives
the zest of 2 pickled lemons
salt

Dice the carrots fairly small, wash and leave to drain.

Cut the chickens up into pieces and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal, salt, ginger, saffron, crushed garlic, oil and 2 glassfuls of water.

Place over a moderate heat, put the lid on the saucepan and when it has boiled for a few seconds, stir to mix the spices well. Put the carrots in the saucepan still on the heat. Sprinkle with salt and a handful of chopped parsley. Continue cooking with the lid on and add a little water if necessary.

When the chickens and carrots are cooked, add the lemon zest cut into quarters, the olives and lemon juice. Leave to boil down until the sauce is thick and rich. Remove from the heat.

Arrange the pieces of chicken on a dish with the offal and carrots on top and decorate with the olives and lemon zest. Serve very hot.

N.B. Generally the chickens and carrots need the same amount of time to cook, but sometimes the carrots are done first. In this case they should be taken out and put in a colander while the chickens are left to finish cooking in the sauce. Put the carrots back when the chickens are cooked and add the lemon juice, olives and zest at the same time.

chicken with tomatoes and honey

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing about 3 lbs each

5 kg (11 lbs) of tomatoes
300 g (11 oz) of butter
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
2 grated onions
6 soupspoonfuls of thick honey
1 heaped soupspoonful of cinnamon
150 g (5 oz) of almonds
1 soupspoonful of grilled sesame seed
salt

Peel, seed and cut the tomatoes into pieces (never pass them through a vegetable sieve). Put the chickens, whole or cut into pieces, in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal. Put the tomatoes on top. Add salt, butter, pepper, saffron and grated onions. Cook with the lid on, over a moderate heat, stirring frequently.

When the chickens are cooked, i.e. the flesh comes away from the bones easily in the fingers, take them out and put on one side. Let the tomatoes boil down until all the juice has evaporated and the butter separates from them. This is a sort of tomato purée which must be stirred often, taking care to scrape the bottom of the saucepan to prevent anything sticking. Leave the tomatoes to fry gently in the butter for a few minutes and then add the honey and cinnamon. Mix well and put the chickens back to re-heat and absorb the sauce. They should be turned often. Remove from the heat. As the chicken is re-heating, fry the peeled almonds in oil. Arrange the chicken on a dish with the tomato purée on top and decorate with the almonds and grilled sesame seeds. Serve at once.

chicken with " meslalla " (crushed olives)

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing about 3 lbs each (see choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65)

1 1/2 kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of mestalla olives (see page II)
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers)
1 crushed garlic clove
3/4 ladleful of groundnut oil
1 soupspoonful of paprika
1 seaspoonful of cumin
1 teaglassful of lemon juice (or more to taste)
salt

Stone the olives. Bring them to the boil 3 times running, changing the water each time. Add salt the third time. Remove from the water, leave to drain and press the excess water out. Put on one side.

Cut the chickens up into pieces, put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal, salt, ginger, saffron, crushed garlic and oil. Add two big glassful of water. Cook with the lid on over a moderate heat turning the pieces over frequently. Add water if necessary. Take out the pieces of chicken when cooked and put on one side. Let the sauce boil down to a rich thick consistency and add, while it is still cooking, the paprika, cumin and lemon juice and mix well. Add the olives and bring back to the boil. Let boil down until the sauce is thick. Check the seasoning and take off the heat. Before serving re-heat the chicken in the saucepan with olives. Arrange the pieces of chicken on a dish with the olives on top.

stuffed "maâmer" chicken with couscous

3 bowlfuls of couscous for the stuffing (see preparation page 32)
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
1 stick of cinnamon
4 soupspoonfuls of thick honey
1 soupspoonful of cinnamon
2 grated onions
150 g (5 oz) of butter
salt

Leave the chickens whole. Remove the entrails through an incision made lengthways in the breast. Take off the neck without tearing the skin and wash in the usual manner. When well drained, stuff the chickens with couscous, pushing it as far down as possible. Sew up the incision. Tie up the skin round the neck carefully and truss.

Put the chickens in a thick-bottomed saucepan, add salt, pepper, saffron, the stick of cinnamon, butter and grated onions. Cover with 2 big glassfuls of water.

Cook with the lid on, turning the chickens over from time to time being careful not to pierce the skin. Add water if necessary.

When the chickens are cooked add 4 soupspoonfuls of honey and a soupspoonful of cinnamon. Mix and boil the sauce down until it is thick and the rich and the chickens golden brown. Remove from the heat. Serve very hot with 2 small separate plates of couscous stuffing.

m'cherbel chicken fried with eggs

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing about 3 lbs each (see choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65)

1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers)
2 grated onions
1 stick of cinnamon
150 g (5 oz) of butter
1 handful of chopped parsley
1/2 teaglassful of lemon juice
8 beaten eggs in which the following are mixed:
3 medium-sized potatoes, cooked with the chicken and mashed
1 handful of choopped parsley
1/2 teaspoonful of paprika
enough cumin to cover the tip of a knife
1 teaspoonful of cinnamon
the juice of 1 lemon
salt

Put the chickens (whole or cut in pieces) in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal. Add the grated onions, butter, cinnamon, pepper, saffron and salt. Add 3 large glassfuls of water and the potatoes which are to be taken out when cooked. Cook with the lid on, over a moderate heat, turning the chickens over from time to time. Add a little water if necessary.

When the chickens are cooked, i.e. the flesh comes away from the bones easily in the fingers, add a handful of chopped parsley. Take the chickens out of the sauce and boil it down until it becomes thick.

Sieve the hot potatoes and add them to the 8 beaten eggs, chopped parsley, salt, cinnamon, cumin and paprika.

20 minutes before the meal, re-heat the chickens. Put 2 ladlefuls of oil and 100 g (4 oz) of butter in a frying pan, bring the fat to the boil, take the chickens out of the sauce and dip them in the egg mixture and fry golden brown all over. Make fritters with the remainder of the egg and potato mixture which should be browned on both sides. When everything has been fried, arrange the chicken on a dish with the offal and fritters on top. Re-heat the sauce, adding the lemon juice, bring to the boil and pour over the chicken. Serve at once.

m'derbel chicken

Prepare 2 chickens, weighing about 3 lbs each, as described in the first recipe for Mqualli chicken but omitting the olives and pickled lemon.

Here is the recipe for preparing the red pumpkin as a sweet purée

6 kg (13·lbs 4 oz) of red pumpkin
1 ladleful of oil
300 g (11 oz) of caster sugar
1 heaped soupspoonful of cinnamon
salt

Cut the pumpkin in very thin slices 2 to 3 mm thick (1/10"). Put in a thick-bottomed saucepan on a moderate heat without adding any water.

Leave to cook, stirring frequently and scraping the bottom of the saucepan to prevent the pumkpkin sticking.

When all the liquid has evaporated and the pumpkin purée is dry, add the caster sugar and the oil and allow to sizzle gently until it turns a good golden colour. This takes about an hour after the liquid has evaporated. Add the cinnamon and leave on the heat until the oil is again distinguishable. Take off the heat and drain off the surplus fat. To serve, re-heat the chickens, arrange them in a dish with the pumpkin purée on top. Pour the sauce over. The pumpkin purée will keep several days and can be served as a sort of jam.

"m'kaddem or souiri" chicken (with eggs)

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing about 3 lbs each (see choosing a chicken and cleaning page 65)

1 teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers)
250 g (9 oz) of butter
2 grated onions
1 stick of cinnamon
1 handful of chopped parsley
1/2 teaglassful of lemon juice

12 whole eggs to which the following are added:
1 teaspoonful of cinnamon
1/2 teaspoonful of pepper
enough cumin to cover the tip of a knife
salt

Cut the chickens up into pieces the size of half a leg. Put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal. Add salt and cover with 2 big glassfuls of water.

Add butter, grated onion, cinnamon, pepper and saffron, Mix together and cook with the lid on, over a moderate heat, turning the pieces over from time to time and adding water if necessary.

When the chickens are cooked, add the chopped parsley and the lemon juice. Leave to boil down until the sauce is rich and then take out the stick of cinnamon.

Beat the eggs gently then add the salt, pepper, cumin and cinnamon and put on one side.

20 minutes before the meal, re-heat the chickens in a tajin with half the sauce (keep the other half). When the chickens are hot, pour the beaten eggs over them and sprinkle with a little paprika. Put the tajin in a hot oven for 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and pour over the remainder of the sauce after re-heating it. Serve at once.

• M'Kaddem or Souiri • Chicken (with eggs)

chicken with prunes and honey

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing about 3 lbs each (see instructions for choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65)

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of prunes
1 soupspoonful of grilled sesame seeds
200 g (7 oz) of almonds
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers)
1 stick of cinnamon
2 grated onions
200 g (7 oz) of butter
1 heaped teaspoonful of cinnamon
4 soupspoonfuls of thick honey
salt

Truss the chickens, put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal, salt, pepper, saffron, the stick of cinnamon, grated onions and butter. Add 2 big glassfuls of water. Cook with the lid on, over a moderate heat, turning the chickens from time to time. Add water if necessary. When the chickens are cooked and the flesh comes off the bones in the fingers easily, take off the heat and put on one side.

Wash the prunes and put in the saucepan still on the heat. 15 minutes later add the honey and cinnamon. Boil the sauce down until it is syrupy. Check the seasoning and put the chickens back in the saucepan without crushing the prunes. Remove from the heat.

Meanwhile skin the almonds and fry them quickly in oil a few minutes before the meal is to be served. Put the sesame seeds in the oven for a few minutes.

To serve re-heat the chickens without letting the sauce boil away. Arrange in a dish with the prunes on top. Pour the sauce over and decorate with the almonds and sesame seeds. Serve at once.

chicken with sweet onion sauce (Kammama)

Ingredients for 2 chickens weighing about 3 lbs each (see instructions for choosing and cleaning a chicken page 65)
4 kg (9 lbs) of onions
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of tomatoes (optional)
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed saffron flowers)
250 g (9 oz) of butter
4 to 5 rounded soupspoonfuls of sugar
1 rounded soupspoonful of cinnamon
1 stick of cinnamon
salt

Cut the chickens in pieces. Put them in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal. Add salt, saffron, pepper, butter, the stick of cinnamon and one sliced onion and a glassful of water.

Boil for a few minutes over a moderate heat and mix the spices well. Add the onions, cut in rings 1 cm (½") thick, and the tomatoes, peeled, seeded and cut in half. After a few minutes boiling, remove the chicken pieces and put them in an oven-proof dish. Immediately add the sugar and cinnamon to the sauce. Mix well and put the onions and tomatoes on top of the chicken with the sauce poured over the top. Cook in the oven, basting often.

When cooked, pour the sauce into a saucepan and boil it down until it becomes thick and syrupy. When the chickens are cooked and the onions gold and caramelized on top, remove from the oven.

Arrange on a dish with the onions on top of the chicken pieces and pour the sauce over. Serve at once.

young pigeons stuffed with couscous

Ingredients for 10 young pigeons
about 6 bowls of couscous stuffing (see recipe page 32)
1 teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
150 g (5 oz) of butter
2 grated onions
1 stick of cinnamon
4 to 5 soupspoonfuls of thick honey
1 level soupspoonful of cinnamon
salt

Choose plump, tender young pigeons. Make an incision lengthways in the breast to take out the entrails. Remove the gizzard and neck without tearing the skin and wash the pigeons after having rolled them in salt.

Chicken with sweet onion sauce (above) and
Pigeons stuffed with couscous (below)

Rinse well and leave to drain. Then put a little couscous stuffing inside each of them. Do not over stuff or they will burst during cooking. Sew up the opening and tie up the skin round the neck carefully.

Put the pigeons in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, pepper, saffron, butter, grated onions and the stick of cinnamon, then 2 glassfuls of water. Cook with the lid on, turning the pigeons over gently from time to time, taking great care not to pierce the skins. When the pigeons are cooked, add the honey and cinnamon. Let the sauce boil down, turning the pigeons over from time to time until they are nice and brown. Take off the heat when the sauce is rich and thick.

Serve the pigeons on a dish with the sauce poured over.

Serve the couscous stuffiing separately on 2 small plates.

young pigeons grilled over charcoal

Ingredients for 10 young pigeons
For cooking:
1 soupspoonful of paprika
1 level teaspoonful of cumin
100 g (4 oz) of butter
1 crushed garlic clove
salt

Put the pigeons in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, butter, paprika, cumin and garlic, together with 2 glassfuls of water. Cook over a moderate heat with the lid on. Check that each pigeon is cooked and then remove from the saucepan. Leave the sauce to boil down and remove from the heat.

For grilling:
Add to the sauce after boiling down and cooling the following:
1 teaspoonful of paprika
1/2 teaspoonful of cumin
Rub this mixture over the pigeons

15 minutes before serving, grill the pigeons over charcoal either on skewers of placed on a grille. Serve very hot.

k'dra pigeon with almonds

Ingredients for 10 young pigeons
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
250 g (9 oz) of almonds
2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of onions
1 handful of chopped parsley
200 g (7 oz) of butter
salt

Wash the pigeons and place them whole in the thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, pepper, saffron, butter, 2 sliced onions and the skinned almonds. Cover with 2 glassfuls of water.

Cook with the lid on, turning the pigeons over from time to time and adding water if necessary.

Check each pigeon to see that it is cooked and then take them off the heat. Add the remaining sliced onions to the sauce, together with the chopped parsley, a little salt and a pinch of saffron. Shake the saucepan to mix well. When the onions are cooked but still firm, check the seasoning and remove from the heat.

Arrange the pigeons on a dish, with the almonds and onions on top, and serve at once.

N.B. The k'dra sauce should be thinner than the Mqualli tajine.

turkey stuffed with couscous

Ingredients for a young turkey weighing about 3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz). (Wash as instructed for chicken on page 65)

3 bowls of couscous (see recipe page 32)
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
1 large grated onion
1 stick of cinnamon
150 g (5 oz) of butter
3 to 4 soupspoonfuls of thick honey
1 soupspoonful of cinnamon
salt

Take care to choose a tender turkey. To remove the offal, make a lengthways incision in the breast. Remove the gizzard and the neck without tearing the skin.Wash carefully with water and salt. Rince and leave to drain. Then stuff with the couscous pressing it in as far as possible. Sew up the opening. Tie up the neck and truss the bird. Put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, pepper, saffron, the stick of cinnamon, grated onion, butter and 3 glassfuls of water. Cook on a moderate heat with the lid on, turning the turkey over from time to time, taking care not to pierce the skin. Add water if necessary. When the turkey is cooked, add the honey and cinnamon. Mix and leave to boil down until the sauce is rich and thick and the turkey golden brown and impregnated with the sauce.

Arrange on a dish, pour the sauce over and serve very hot. Serve 2 small plates of couscous separately.

"m'hammer" turkey

Ingredients for a young turkey weighing about 3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz)

1 heaped soupspoonful of paprika
2 level teaspoonfuls of cumin
2 crushed garlic cloves
1 small whole onion
200 g (7 oz) of butter
1 small bunch of coriander tied together
salt

Wash the turkey in the same way as the chickens (see page 65).

Put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the offal. Add salt, paprika, cumin, crushed garlic, onion, butter and the small bunch of coriander which should be removed when the turkey is cooked. Cover with sauce from time to time so that it absorbs the sauce as it cooks and add extra water if necessary. Take the onion out as soon as it is cooked and keep on one side.

When the turkey is cooked and the flesh comes away from the bones easily. Sieve the cooked onion, together with a piece of turkey liver and a little of the sauce either in a vegetable sieve or mix in an electric blender. Mix in a teaspoonful of flour and then add this to the sauce to bind. Check the seasoning and boil until the sauce is thick. 20 minutes before serving, heat 100 g (4 oz) of butter and a ladle of oil in a pan and fry the turkey all over until golden brown. Place on a hot dish, re-heat the sauce, without letting it boil down, adding two soupspoonfuls of the frying fat stirring the saucepan with a firm circular movement and pour over the turkey. Serve at once.

game

"m'hammer" young partridges (fried)

Ingredients for 6 young partridges

- *1 onion*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of cumin*
- *1 teaspoonful of paprika*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of pepper*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron'*
- *(mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)*
- *1 small bunch of coriander and parsley tied together*
- *2 soupspoonfuls of groundnut oil*
- *1 teaspoonful of flour*
- *1 garlic clove*
- *150 g (5 oz) of butter*
- *salt*

Peel the garlic and the onion, cut in pieces and pound in a mortar with sufficient salt to season the partridges. Mix with the spices. Drain and wipe the partridges with a clean cloth and coat inside and out with this mixture.

Put the butter and the oil in a thick-bottomed saucepan over a low heat. Leave the partridges to cook in this fat, turning them over frequently until they are completely impregnated with the spices. After a few minutes add 2 large glassfuls of water, the bunch of coriander and parsley which should be removed when the dish is cooked.

Cook with the lid on, over a moderate heat, turning the partridges over frequently. Add extra water if necessary. When the partridges are cooked, i.e. the flesh comes off the bones easily, let the sauce boil down until it is thick and then take the partridges out of the saucepan. Add a teaspoonful of flour blended with a little water to the sauce to bind it and bring to the boil. Leave on one side.

20 minutes before serving, heat 100 g (4 oz) of butter and a ladleful of oil in a pan and brown the partridges all over in this.

Arrange the partridges on a hot dish, re-heat the sauce adding 2 soupspoonfuls of the frying fat,stirring the saucepan with a firm circular movement and pour the sauce over. Serve at once.

"k'dra" young partridges with almonds

Ingredients for 6 young partridges.

- *1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)*
- *200 g (7 oz) of almonds*
- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of onions*
- *200 g (7 oz) of butter*
- *1 handful of chopped parsley*
- *salt*

Wash the partridges after removing the entrails. Roll them in salt, rinse well and drain. Put them whole in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, pepper, saffron, butter, 2 sliced onions and the skinned almonds. Add 2 big glassfuls of water and cook with the lid on, turning the partridges over from time to time and adding a little water if necessary. When the partridges are tender, take them out of the saucepan and add the remainder of the sliced onions, the chopped parsley, a little salt and a pinch of saffron to the sauce. Shake the saucepan well to mix. When the onions are cooked but still firm, check the seasoning and remove from the heat. Arrange the partridges on a dish with the onions and almonds on top and serve at once.

N.B. The k'dra sauce should be thinner than the Mqualli tajin

mrouzia style hare (sweet dish)

Ingredients for a good-sized hare

- *150 g (5 oz) of raisins*
- *150 g (5 oz) of almonds*
- *1 heaped soupspoonful of Ras El Hanout (see page 8)*
- *1 leveal teaspoonful of pepper*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)*
- *2 grated onions*
- *150 g (5 oz) of butter*
- *1 teaspoonful of cinnamon*
- *4 soupspoonfuls of thick honey*

Wash the hare in salt and water after having cleaned it and cut it up. Leave to drain. Mix the spices–the Ras El Hanout, pepper, saffron and cinnamon and coat the hare all over with the mixture.

Wash the raisins, drain, mix with the remainder of the spices and put on one side.

Put the hare in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, butter, peeled almonds and 2 grated onions. Cover with water. Cook with the lid, on, turning the pieces over from time to time. When the hare is cooked and quite tender, take out of the saucepan. Add the raisins and the honey to the sauce and boil down until it is thick and syrupuy. Put the hare back into the sauce and leave for a good 5 minutes to simmer so that it becomes well impregnated with the sauce, then remove from the heat.

Serve very hot.

hare m'hammer

Ingredients for a good-sized hare

- *1 teaspoonful (heaped) of paprika*
- *1 level teaspoonful of cumin*
- *2 crushed garlic cloves*
- *salt*
- *150 g (5 oz) of butter*
- *1 teaspoonful of flour*
- *ground chilli (to taste)*

Wash the hare in salt and water after having cleaned it and cut it up. Leave to drain. Put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, cumin, paprika, butter, crushed garlic and (according to taste) a little ground chilli. Cover with water. Cook with the lid on, turning the pieces over from time to time to that they are impregnated all over with the sauce. When the hare is cooked, i.e. the flesh comes off the bones easily in the fingers, take it out of the saucepan. Add a teaspoonful of flour blended with a little water to the sauce, stirring quickly. Leave to boil down to a rich, thick consistency and remove from the heat. 20 minutes before the meal, heat 100 g (4 oz) of butter and half a ladleful of oil in the frying pan and fry the pieces of hare until golden brown all over.

Arrange on a hot dish. Re-heat the sauce, adding 1 soupspoonful of the frying fat stirring the saucepan with a firm circular movement and pour over the hare. Serve at once.

snails

These snails are very much smaller than the Burgundy variety and are white with black circles. They are delicious served with plenty of their dark stock. This stock is most energy-giving and beneficial for stomach troubles, but it has a very hot taste.

Ingredients for 4 or 5 kg (9 lbs or 11 lbs) of snails

1 soupspoonful of green aniseed (hablet hlaoua)
3 soupspoonfuls of caraway seeds (Kerouiya)
5 soupspoonfuls of thyme (zaatar)
1 soupspoonful of paprika
1 teaspoonful of green tea
2 pieces of liquorice root (arksous)
2 sprigs of absinthe (chiba)
5 sprigs of mint
the skin of one bitter orange (elranj)
the skin of one sweet orange
7 or 8 whole chillies
3 or 4 pounded grains of gum-acacia (meska beldia)
salt

Wash the snails 7 times running. The first 4 times rub them with a great deal of salt and then wash 3 times in clean water. Stir well in a large bucket and when the water becomes clear, throw it away and drain the snails.

Meanwhile put 5 to 6 litres (9 to 11 pts) of water to boil with the spices (whole), herbs and salt. Mix and leave to boil for a few minutes before tipping all the snails into the boiling water.

It takes 1 to 1 ½ hours to cook the snails. When they come away from their shells easily and the flesh is no longer rubbery, check the seasoning and remove from the heat.

Serve in the stock, hot or tepid to taste. (This dish can be kept for 3 or 4 days in a cool place.)

butcher's meat

grills

All these are grilled over charcoal. The charcoal should be lit a good half an hour beforehand.

kefta (grilled rissoles)

Ingredients for 15 skewers (approx.)

1 lb of boned lamb or beef
100 g (4 oz) of beef or mutton fat
1 teaspoonful of cumin
2 teaspoonfuls of paprika
1 pinch of Sudan felfla (very hot ground pepper)
1 large bunch of parsley
1 large bunch of coriander
1 onion
salt

optional:
1 heaped teaspoonful of cinnamon
1 or 2 sprigs of fresh mint

Wash the parsley and the coriander, drain and stalk carefully. Cut the meat up into pieces and mince.

Cut up the fat and mix with the meat. Add the salt, parsley, coriander, onion, cumin, paprika and hot pepper. Mince all the ingredients together twice.

Knead this mince hard and leave to stand for about an hour. Then take a piece of mince about the size of chicken's egg in moist hands and wrap round the skewer, shaping it into a sausage about 10 to 12 cms (4″ to 5″) long. See that the ends are firmly stuck to the skewer to prevent the meat turning round the skewer while it is being cooked. Grill quickly over the charcoal, turning the skewer often. Make sure it does not dry out over the fire and serve with mint tea.

Kababs

boulfaf (grilled liver)

Ingredients for about 15 skewers

- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of sheep or calves' liver*
- *1 sheep's caul*
- *2 heaped teaspoonfuls of cumin*
- *3 teaspoonfuls of paprika*
- *ground chilli to taste*
- *salt*

Take off the membrane covering the liver, wash and cut it in slices 3 cm (1 ¼") thick. Grill lightly on both sides over the charcoal. Cut into 2 cm (1") cubes.

Mix salt, cumin, paprika, chilli and season the liver with half this mixture.

Wash the caul, spread it out, drain and spread with the other half of the spices.

Then cut this caul into small rectangles 2 x 6 cm (1" x 2 1/2"). It is easier to cut the caul if it is first rolled up. Wrap up each piece of liver in a piece of caul. Put 6 or 7 pieces on each skewer and grill over the embers of a good charcoal fire. Serve at once with mint tea.

N.B. If the fat catches fire, put it out by pouring a little water on it.

grilled veal heart

Ingredients for a veal heart weighing about 1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz)

- *1 soupspoonful of paprika*
- *1 heaped teaspoonful of cumin*
- *1 good pinch of ground chilli*
- *salt*

Mix the spices. Cut the heart into 2 cm (1″) cubes, rinse and drain. Season with the mixed spices. Put 6 or 7 pieces on each skewer and grill over charcoal. Serve at once with mint tea.

kouah

Another recipe for grilled liver

Ingredients for about 12 skewers

- *1 sheep's liver*
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of mutton fat*
- *1 teaspoonful of cumin*
- *2 teaspoonfuls of paprika*
- *1 pinch of Sudan felfla (ground hot pepper)*
- *salt*

Take the outer membrane off the liver, wash and grill lightly. Cut into 2 cm (1″) cubes. Cut the fat up in the same way after rinsing. Mix the spices with salt and sprinkle the liver and the fat with this mixture. Mix well. Put 6 or 7 cubes on each skewer, alternating liver and fat.

Grill over charcoal and serve at once with mint tea.

kabab

Ingredients for about 10 skewers
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of fillet steak
or leg of mutton
2 white kidneys
2 kidneys in their fat
1 big bunch of parsley chopped very fine
1 small finely chopped onion
salt

Mix the salt and chopped parsley by rubbing them with the palm of the hand on the table.

Cut the meat, the kidneys and the kidney fat into 2 cm (1″) cubes. Take the skin off the white kidneys. Grill lightly on a spit over charcoal. Mix with the salt and parsley and the chopped onion. Put about 10 cubes on each skewer. with 2 cubes of meat to for one of fat. Broil over the charcoal embers and serve at once.

offal

fried m'chermel liver

Ingredients for 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of veal liver
Chermoula:
1 soupspoonful of paprika
1 teaspoonful of cumin
salt
2 soupspoonfuls of vinegar
1 bunch of coriander

Preparation of the chermoula:

Stalk the coriander and pound in a mortar "mehraz" with the salt. Add the paprika, cumin and the vinegar mixed with 1/2 glassful of water.

Cut the liver in thin slices, wash and drain. Leave the liver to marinade in the chermoula for several hours.

Then cover the slices of liver with hard wheat flour (sieved) and dry in boiling oil. Serve hot or cold.

m'chermel liver in sauce

Ingredients for 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of calves' liver
chermoula (see recipe page 84)
6 or 7 preserved olives
the juice of a lemon
1/2 a pickled lemon
3/4 tea glassful of frying oil
a small bunch of finely chopped parsley

Prepare the liver as for fried m'chermel liver.

When fried, cut the liver into small cubes and put on one side.

Put the chermoula in which the liver has been marinaded in a saucepan with a small bunch of finely chopped parsley. Add 3/4 of a teaglassful of frying oil, lemon juice and a glassful of water. Bring to the boil and add 6 or 7 preserved olives, half a pickled lemon cut in slices and the liver (not including any crumbs of fried flour which may have fallen off when it was being diced). Leave to boil for a few minutes and remove from the heat before the sauce becomes thick. As it cools, the sauce thickens and it becomes too thick and not very appetizing if it has been allowed to boil down too much.

Arrange on a dish, decorate with the lemon and olives and serve cold.

calves' heel

Ingredients for 4 calves' heels (10 to 12 people)
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of coarsely ground wheat rubbed vigorously and freed from its husks (sold ready prepared in Arab markets)
1 bowl of chick-peas soaked overnight
1 large grated onion
1 heaped soupspoonful of paprika
1 teaspoonful of ground chilli
2 soupspoonfuls of oil
enough salt to season

Buy the calves' heels already cleaned and scraped. Divide into 3 and wash well. Put in a large thick-bottomed saucepan. Add the paprika, chilli, oil, grated onion and sufficient salt. Cover with water and boil for half and hour. Then add the chickpeas and the wheat. Fill the saucepan 3/4 full of water and leave to boil a further 15 minutes. Then leave to cook very slowly with the lid on, either over the charcoal embers or in a very slow oven without ever stirring. They need 8 or 9 hours' cooking. Usually they are prepared in the evening so that they can cook right through the night.

After this time if the wheat and the chick-peas have absorbed all the liquid and the sauce is thick and creamy, check the seasoning, remove the saucepan from the heat and only re-heat in time for the meal. If, however, the sauce is a little too thin, pour it into another saucepan and boil down until it reaches the proper consistency. If the calves' heels are too fat and they make the sauce too greasey, skim the fat off before re-heating. Serve piping hot.

mutton tripe

Mutton tripe comes from the fatty parts of the colon, stomach and lungs of the animal. How to wash: soak the colon in very hot, not boiling, water for a few minutes and then scrape vigorously with a knife until it becomes white.

Par-boil the stomach and the lungs. Cut all the parts into 3 cm (1¼") squares. Rub hard and stir around in salt. Wash in many changes of water. Put in a container in a cool place. Cover with water until the next day then drain.

Ingredients for tripe from 2 sheep
2 soupspoonfuls of paprika
2 crushed garlic cloves
1/2 ladleful of groundnut oil
1/2 teaspoonful of ground chilli

Put the tripe in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, paprika, garlic, chilli and oil and cover with water. Cook with the lid on over a moderate heat for 3 good hours. At the end of this time, add 3/4 of a ladleful of vinegar and one level teaspoonful of cumin. Leave to boil down until the sauce is thick. Check the seasoning and remove from heat. Serve piping hot.

Calves heel

white kidneys with chick-peas and onions

Ingredients:

3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz) white kidneys
1 glassful chick peas soaked the previous day and peeled the next
1 1/2 kg (3 lbs 5 oz) onions
a handful of chopped parsley
200 g (7 oz) butter
1 coffee spoonful saffron (mixture of ground saffron flowers and saffron in sachet)
1 rounded teaspoonful pepper, salt.

Cut the skin and remove the kidneys. Turn over gently in salt without crushing them, and wash with their pocket in fresh water.
Rinse several times.
Cut the kidneys in cubes of 3 cm (1 ¼") and cut the pockets in two. Place the whole in a thick bottomed saucepan, salt lightly (the kidneys having been previously washed in salt), add pepper, saffron, butter, 2 sliced onions and ground chick-peas.
Cover with two glasses of water.
Cook with the lid on over a moderate heat stirring from time to time. If necessary, add water during cooking.
When the kidney meat starts to become firm (1 h. 30 approx.) add the remaining sliced onions and chopped parsley to the pan, then a little salt and a pinch of saffron. Mix well.
Bring to the boil and cook with the lid off.
When the onions are cooked, but quite firm, check seasoning and remove from heat.
Prior to serving, reheat, arrange on a dish, the check-peas and onions covering the kidneys.

N.B. Without being very thin the k'dra sauce is thinner than the m'qualli sauce.

white kidneys in sauce

Ingredients for 6 people: 2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of white kidneys
Cut the skin and remove the kidneys. Turn over gently in salt without crushing them and wash in fresh water. Rinse several times. Cut into 3 cm (1 1/4") cubes and leave to drain.
Put in a saucepan with a little salt (the kidneys having already been washed in salt) and add:

2 teaspoonfuls of paprika
1 teaspoonful of cumin
1/2 teaspoonful of cinnamon
150 g (5 oz) of butter

Cover with water and cook with the lid on, over a moderate heat. When the kidneys feel firm they are cooked. Boil down the sauce until it is thick. Check the seasoning and remove from the heat. Serve very hot.
N.B. The kidney pockets can be used for harira stock.

Mechoui
White kidneys in sauce

steamed sheep's head

Allow 1 sheep's head for 2 people. Buy the sheep's head divided in 2 and ask the butcher to chop off the horns. Take out the brains, and shake the heads hard to make sure that any maggots that might be tucked away inside the ears and mouth fall out. Brush with a stiff brush. Wash in many changes of water and salt very carefully. Rinse several times and leave to drain. Steam as for "steamed meat" (choua). After 2 of 3 hours' cooking, depending on the quality of the meat, take them off the heat and remove any wool. Put back to steam for half an hour and serve piping hot with Kerouiya Harira (see page 37).

calves' tongue in sauce

Par-boil the tongue in very hot, but not boiling, salt water for 15 minutes. Take out of the water and skin, wash in salt and water. Rinse several times and cut into big cubes. Put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt and the following:

Ingredients for 1 tongue

100 g (4 oz) of butter
½ teaspoonful of ground chilli
1 chopped onion
2 teaspoonfuls of paprika

Cover with water and cook for 3 hours with the lid on. At the end of the cooking time, add.

3/4 soupspoonfuls of vinegar
according to taste
1/2 teaspoonful of cumin
1/2 teaspoonful of crushed
coriander seeds.

Leave to boil down until the sauce becomes thick and then remove from the heat. Serve hot.

brains in sauce

Ingredients for 2 sets of calves' brains

Clean the brains and wash in salt and water. Take off the outer membrane and wash well in clean water. Cover the brains with water and allow to stand in a cool place for a few hours. Then rinse and drain.

Cut each brain in six. Put in a saucepan with:

1 heaped teaspoonful of paprika
1 pinch of ground chilli
1 soupspoonful of chopped coriander
2 crushed garlic cloves
4 soupspoonfuls of groundnut oil
be careful when adding the salt as the
brains have already been salted
3 soupspoonfuls of lemon juice

Cover with water and cook with the lid on for about 2 hours. When cooked add 3 soupspoonfuls of lemon juice. Leave to boil down until a thick sauce is produced and remove from the heat. Serve cold.

mechoui

Mechoui is a whole sheep cooked in a spit over a charcoal fire. Entirely spread with butter, it should cook very slowly and be basted all over from time to time with a mixture of salt water and butter. It takes 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 hours to cook the sheep, depending on how tender it is. When cooked the meat should break easily in the fingers. The charcoal embers are placed under and all around the sheep which is fixed to the spit and held fast at each end by sticks, or big stones, about 50 cm (20″) from the ground. This is to prevent the sheep becoming burnt on the outside before it is cooked right through.

This a a highly esteemed national dish which is generally prepared by a "chouaye", a professional cook, who delivers it piping hot in time for the meal. One then only has to season the pieces chosen with a little cumin and salt and enjoy the result.

mutton mechoui

Ingredients for 8 to 10 people

Choose half a side of mutton (shoulder and chops) weighing 3 to 3 ½ kg (6 lbs 10 oz to 8 lbs), rinse.

Mix together:

1 heaped soupspoonful of paprika
1 teaspoonful of cumin
100 g (4 oz) of melted butter
enough salt to season

Spread the mutton with this mixture. Loosen some of the skin under the shoulder and put a little of this mixture inside. Cook in the oven with the fleshy side downwards. Add a glassful of water. Baste with the juices from time to time so that the meat does not go dry.

After about 2 hours' cooking, turn the meat over and cook the other side. Leave about 30 minutes in the oven and remove once you have checked that the flesh breaks easily in the fingers. Arrange on a dish without the gravy. Eat while piping hot, seasoned with cumin and salt.

mutton "m'hammer chouakder"

Ingredients for 8 to 10 people
Choose half a side of mutton (shoulder and chops) weighing 3 to 3 ½ kg (6 lbs 10 oz to 8 lbs). Rinse and put in thick-bottomed saucepan with the fleshy part downwards. Add salt and the following:

1 teaspoonful of pepper
1/2 teaspoonful of saffron (preferably crushed flowers)
1/2 teaspoonful of ginger
1 bunch of coriander tied together
2 chopped onions
150 g (5 oz) of butter
2 glassfuls of water

Cook with the lid on over a moderate heat, basting with the juice from time to time. After 2 to 2 ½ hours cooking, see if the flesh will break off easily in the fingers, take out the bunch of coriander and boil down the sauce until it is thick, and remove from the heat.

(This recipe can, if necessary, be done without coriander.)

15 minutes before serving, fry the meat golden brown with butter in a frying pan. Arrange on a hot dish, add 2 soupspoonfuls of the butter used for frying to the sauce when re-heating, stirring vigorously the saucepan with a circular movement, and pour over the meat. Serve at once.

roast mutton (delaâ m'hamra)

Ingredients for 8 to 10 people
Choose half a side of mutton (shoulder and chops) weighing from 3 to 3 ½ kg (6 lbs 10 oz to 8 lbs).
Mix together:

1 heaped soupspoonful of paprika
1 teaspoonful of cumin
2 crushed garlic cloves
enough salt to season

150 to 200 g (5 oz to 7 oz) of softened butter according to how fat the meat is
1 teaspoonful of flour.

Coat the meat with this mixture after rinsing and draining it. Put in a thick-bottomed saucepan and cover halfway up with water. Leave to cook with the lid on over a moderate heat. Baste with the sauce now and again. After 2 to 2 ½ hours, check to see if it is cooked by seeing if the meat will break off easily in the fingers.

The sauce should be left to boil down until thick. It is improved by adding a teaspoonful of flour blended with a little water. Bring to the boil and remove from the heat.

15 minutes before serving, fry the meat golden brown on all sides in a frying pan containing a mixture of butter and oil.

When nice and brown, serve on a hot dish. Mix 2 soupspoonfuls of the frying fat with the sauce, stirring vigorously the saucepan with a circular motion. Pour the sauce over the meat and serve at once.

choua (Steamed mutton)

Choose either the saddle, best end of neck or shoulder. The mutton should be rather fat.

Allow 3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz) for 6 people as steamed meat shrinks by a half when cooked.

Fill the lower part of a couscous steamer 3/4 full of water and put on the heat.

Peel and wash 1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of potatoes which should be cut in large quarters. Put them in the bottom of the "keskes" (upper part of the steamer). Put the meat, cut into big pieces and sprinkled with salt, on the top. Cover with a damp cloth. Close the 2 parts of the steamer so as to make the join between them airtight by means of a strip of material steeped in flour and water paste. In this way steam can only escape out of the top. For the same reason, put a lid on top of the steamer loaded with a heavy object, such as the mortar. Do not take the lid off for 2 hours and then check if the meat is done. When it can be broken easily in the fingers, take off the heat. Serve piping hot with salt and cumin.

N.B. The water in the steamer can be used for harira.

mutton stuffed with couscous

Ingredients for 8 to 10 people

Choose half a side of mutton (shoulder and chops) weighing about 3 to 3 ½ kg (6 lbs 10 oz to 8 lbs). Rinse and drain. Loosen the skin under the shoulder without tearing it, and push as far inside as possible 3 bowls of couscous stuffing prepared beforehand (see page 32). Sew up again carefully. Put the mutton in a thick-bottomed saucepan, fleshy side downwards, add salt and the following:

1 teaspoonful of pepper
1/2 teaspoon of saffron (preferably crushed flowers)
1 large grated onion
1 stick of cinnamon
150 g (5 oz) of butter
3 glassfuls of water
3 to 4 heaped soupspoonfuls of thick honey
1 souspoonful of cinnamon when the mutton is cooked

Cook with the lid on over a slow heat and after 30 minutes' cooking, turn the meat over carefully, so as not to tear the skin surrounding the stuffing. Baste with the sauce from time to time.

When the meat can be easily broken in the fingers, after 2 ½ to 3 hours, add 3 soupspoonfuls of thick honey, 1 soupspoonful of cinnamon and let the sauce boil down until it is thick and syrupy. Take off the heat. 20 minutes before serving, take out the pieces of meat and brown them in the oven, without any sauce. Arrange on a dish and pour the sauce over the meat, after re-heating. Serve at once.

N.B. Serve a small plates of couscous stuffing separately.

tajines

The preparation is the same for either mutton or veal.
As a rule, either mutton (shoulder and chops) or veal (knuckle) is used for tajines. Have the meat cut up by the butcher with a saw to avoid having any splinters of bone.

slaouia marrow and mlokhia (gumbos) tajine

Ingredients for 8 to 10 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat mutton or veal (shoulder and chops knuckle)
2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of slaouia marrow (a kind of long, pitchershaped pale green marrow with no veins)
marrow with no veins)
300 g (11 oz) of gumbos
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
150 g (5 oz) of butter
1 large grated onion

Cut the meat up into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz). Rinse well and place in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, pepper, saffron, butter and grated onion. Cover with water. Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time.
Meanwhile, scrape the skin of the marrows thoroughly. Cut into two lengthways. Seed and cut into 3 to 4 cm (1 1/4" to 1 1/2") cubes.
Wash and drain.
When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take out of the saucepan and put on one side. Put the marrows in the sauce, cover halfway up with water and add a little salt. Mix well and leave to cook.
Top and tail the gumbos, rinse quickly and put in a separate saucepan. Add salt and cook in a little of the sauce and some water. When the marrows are cooked, remove from the saucepan and let the sauce boil down to a thick consistency.
Just before serving, put the meat and the marrows back in the saucepan and heat slowly. Re-heat the gumbos in the same way. Arrange the meat on a dish with the marrows on top. Sprinkle with the gumbos and pour the sauce over.

meat and marrow tajine (K'dra with zaater)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)
2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of marrows (choose if possible round, roughskinned marrows called "Garaâ harcha").
1 large grated onion
1 soupspoonful of Zaater (a kind of thyme) crushed to a powder in the hands
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
100 g (4 oz) of butter
salt

Cut the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, pepper, saffron, butter and grated onion. Cover with water and cook, stirring from time to time. Add a little water if necessary.

Meanwhile cut up the marrows into 3 or 4 cm (1 ½" or 1 3/4") pieces without peeling them. Wash and drain, then salt and pepper them, adding a little saffron and powdered thyme. Mix well.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take it out of the saucepan and add the marrows to the sauce. Cover halfway up with water. Bring to the boil with the lid on, then take off the lid and leave to cook on a gentle heat.

When the marrows are cooked, boil it down until it becomes thick. Check the seasoning and remove from the heat.

Just before serving, put the meat back carefully into the saucepan taking care not to crush the marrows. Re-heat on a slow heat. Arrange the meat on a dish with the marrows on top and pour the sauce over.

meat and tomato tajine with mlokhia (gumbos) or potatoes

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)
4 kg (9 lbs) of tomatoes
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of Mlokhia (gumbos) when in season or potatoes
1 ½ ladlefuls of groundnut oil
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
1 coffespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
1 handful of chopped parsley
salt

Cut the meat into pieces weighing 150 g (5 oz), rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, ginger, saffron and oil and cover with water. Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time.

Meanwhile, peel, seed and cut up the tomatoes. When the tomatoes are ready, take the pieces of meat out of the saucepan and put on one side. Put the tomatoes in the saucepan and add the parsley and salt. Leave to boil a few seconds then reduce the heat. Top and tail the gumbos and rinse quickly. Put in a separate saucepan with salt and cook with a little sauce from the meat.

Leave the tomatoes to boil down to a purée very gently, stirring, frequently and taking care to scrape the bottom to avoid anything sticking. Once this purée is cooked, put the pieces of meat back into the thick-bottomed saucepan to finish cooking in the tomato. Continue stirring frequently and when the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take the saucepan off the heat.

Arrange the meat on a round dish with the tomato purée poured over and the gumbos scattered over the top. Serve at once.

meat tajine with green beans and tomatoes

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of green beans
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of tomatoes
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
1 good pinch of saffron
1 heaped [illegible]ful of paprika
1 ladleful of g[illegible]
juice of 1 lemon
salt

Cut the meat in pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, ginger, saffron, paprika, oil and the tomatoes which have been peeled, seeded and cut up. Allow to boil for a few seconds then add the green beans. Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers check that the beans are cooked and then add the lemon juice. Leave the sauce to boil down until it is thick then remove from the heat.

Serve very hot in a round dish with the green beans on top of the meat and the sauce poured over.

green bean and meat tajine (m'qualli)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of green beans
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
3/4 ladleful of groundnut oil
1 pickled lemon
1 teaspoonful of flour
10 preserved olives
1 lemon juice

Cut the meat into pieces of about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, ginger, saffron, oil and cover with water. Allow to boil for a few seconds, mix well, and add the green beans. Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When the meat and beans are cooked and tender, add the preserved olives and the pickled lemon zest, cut in pieces , and the lemon juice. Bind the sauce with the flour, blended with a little water, and leave to boil down until it is rich. Remove from the heat. Arrange the pieces of meat on a round dish with the green beans on top. Pour the sauce over and decorate with the pickled lemon and olives.

green bean and meat tajine

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of green beans*
- *1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1 good pinch of saffron*
- *1 soupspoonful of paprika*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of cumin*
- *3/4 ladleful of groundnut oil*
- *1/2 teaglassful of lemon juice*
- *salt*

Cut the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, ginger, saffron and [illegible]. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

Meanwhile, string and wash the green beans, cook in salt water and strain.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, mix the lemon juice, paprika and cumin together and pour into the saucepan and add the green beans. Stir well so that the beans are covered with the sauce.

Let the sauce boil down until it is thick (if necessary bind it with a teaspoonful of flour blended with a little water).

Bring to the boil and remove from the heat.

Arrange the meat on a round dish with the beans on top and pour the sauce over.

meat and cauliflower tajine

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)*
- *2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of cauliflower*
- *1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1 good pinch of saffron*
- *1 ladleful of groundnut oil*
- *1 heaped soupspoonful of paprika*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of cumin*
- *1 teaglassful of lemon juice (more or less to taste)*
- *2 teaspoonfuls of flour*
- *salt*

First cook the cauliflower in boiling salt water. It should be cooked quickly and just long enough to make it tender but not mushy. When cooked leave to drain.

To keep the cauliflower white, add a teaspoonful of flour to the cooking water.

Cut the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, ginger, saffron, oil and cover with water. Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary. When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, leave the sauce to boil down until it becomes thick and remove the meat.

Add the lemon juice, paprika, cumin and a teaspoonful of flour blended with a little water to the sauce. Mix well and add the cauliflower on one side and the meat on the other. Simmer for about 10 minutes, basting the cauliflower with the sauce from time to time to impregnate it with the sauce. Remove the saucepan from the heat when the sauce becomes rich.

Arrange the meat on a round dish with the cauliflower on top and pour the sauce over.

meat and cabbage tajine

Same quantities and method as for the cauliflower and meat tajine. The cabbage needs 1 to 1 ½ hours' cooking.

meat and kidney-bean tajine (m'qualli)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)*
- *3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz) of kidney-beans*
- *1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)*
- *1 ladleful of groundnut oil*
- *1 crushed garlic clove*
- *the zest of a pickled lemon*
- *1 dozen preserved olives*
- *the juice of a lemon*

Cut up the meat in pieces of about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and place in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, saffron, ginger, garlic and oil. Cover with water. Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take it out of the saucepan and put on one side.

Put the kidney-beans in the sauce, after having removed the sprout, add extra water and leave to cook with the lid on.

When the kidney-beans are cooked, add the preserved olives and pickled lemon zest cut in pieces. Boil down to a rich consistency and then re-heat the meat and kidney-beans in the sauce. Remove from the heat.
Arrange the meat on a round dish with the kidney-beans on top and decorate with the olives and lemon zest. Pour the sauce over and serve very hot.

tajine of meat with artichokes (M'qualli) and kidney-beans

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)*
- *3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz) of artichokes*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of fresh kidney-beans*
- *1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)*
- *1 crushed garlic clove*
- *1 ladleful of groundnut oil*
- *1 pickled lemon*
- *10 preserved olives*
- *the juice of 1 lemon*

Peel the artichokes with care, using the hearts only which should be put in a bowl of water and vinegar as soon as they are ready. Clean the kidney-beans and remove the sprout, without peeling them, and put on one side.
Cut up the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the ginger, saffron, garlic and oil. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.
When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take it out of the saucepan. Rinse the kidney-beans, place in a saucepan with half the meat sauce, cover with water so that they do not discolour, and cook with the lid on. When cooked, boil the sauce down until it becomes thick. Check the seasoning.
Meanwhile cook the artichokes in the remainder of the sauce with sufficient water added to cover. Boil the sauce down when the artichokes are cooked to make it thick. Then put the meat, kidney-beans and artichokes back into the thick-bottomed saucepan, adding the zest of pickled lemon, cut in quarters, and the preserved olives. Let the sauce boil for a few seconds and then remove from the heat. Serve hot with the meat underneath the vegetables on a round dish and the sauce poured over. Decorate with the lemon zest and olives.
N.B. Squeeze a little lemon juice over the artichokes if they have become discoloured.

mqualli tajine of meat and white truffles (terfas)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (shoulder and chops of mutton or veal knuckle)*
- *2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of truffles*

Same recipe as for meat and kidney-bean tajine above. Wash the white truffles and rid them of any earth before peeling and cutting into pieces the size of a walnut.

meat, "mlokhia"(gumbos) and quince tajine

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops of or knuckle of veal)
1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of quinces
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of gumbos
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
3/4 ladleful of groundnut oil
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
salt

Cut the meat up into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), wash and drain. Put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, the spices and oil. Cover with water.

Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time, and adding a little extra water if necessary.

Cut the quinces in half without peeling them. Take out the pips and put the quinces in a bowl of water to prevent their going black. If they are really too big, cut them into quarters. When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take it out of the saucepan and put on one side.

Strain the quinces and put in the saucepan with the sauce in it. Add a little salt and a pinch of saffron, then cover halfway up with water. Mix well and let it cook.

In the meantime, top and tail the gumbos, rinse quickly and put in another saucepan. Add salt and cook with a little of the sauce and water. Keep a close watch on the quinces as some will cook more quickly than others. Take them out of the saucepan when they are done.

Bind the sauce with a teaspoonful of flour blended with a little water and cook until it becomes thick and creamy.

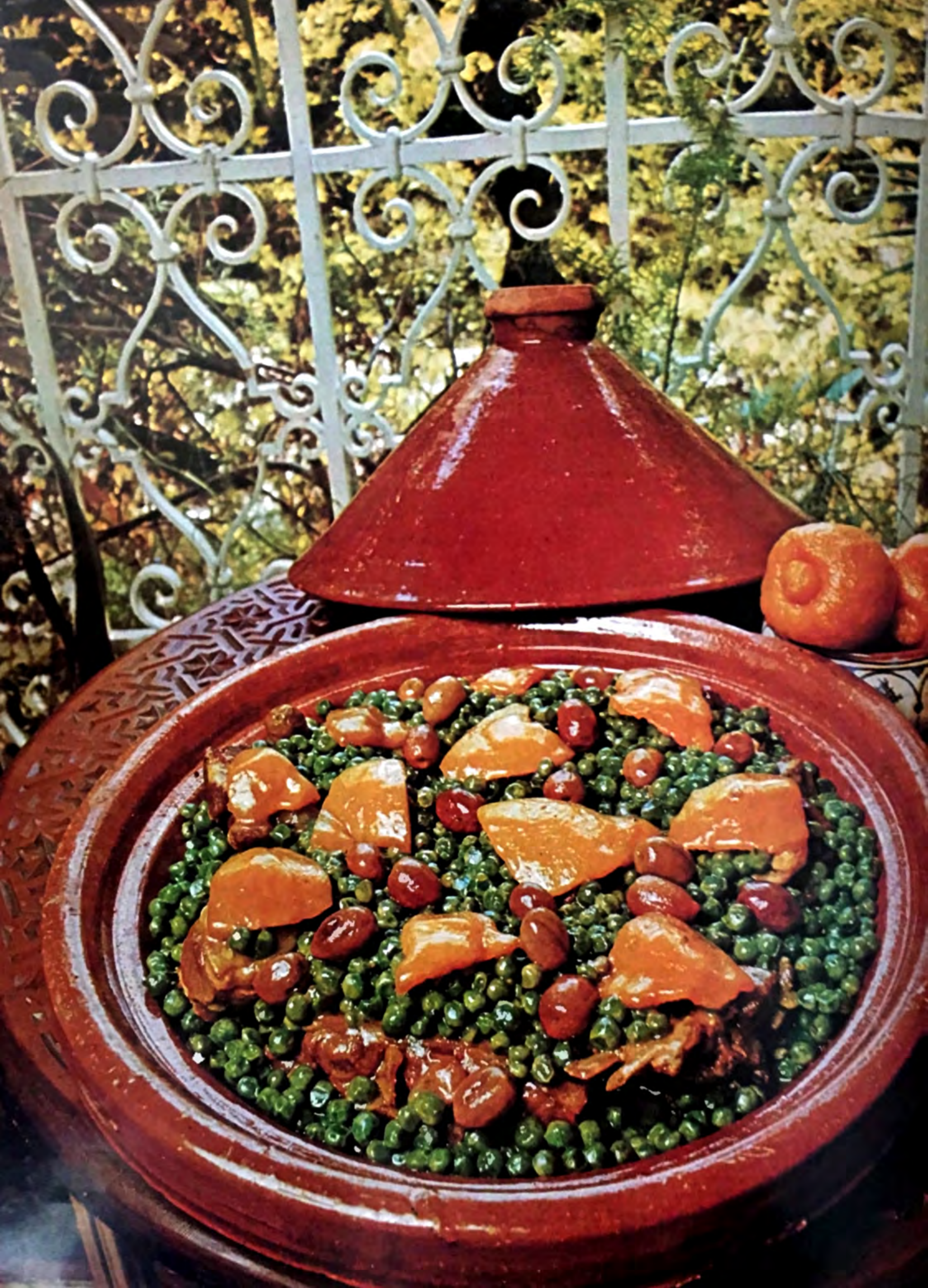
Just before serving, put the pieces of meat back in the saucepan taking care not to crush the quinces. Heat up on a low heat. Re-heat the gumbos. Put the meat on a round dish with the quinces on top and sprinkle the gumbos all over. Pour the sauce over.

green spring apple tajine

Same recipe as for quince and gumbo tajine, but without the gumbos.

pear tajine (bou aouid)

Same recipe as for quince and gumbo tajine but without the gumbos.



meat and green pea tajine

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)*
- *2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of fresh green peas*
- *1 teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)*
- *1 ladleful of groundnut oil*
- *1 pickled lemon*
- *10 preserved olives*
- *salt*

Cut the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and put them in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, saffron, ginger and oil. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take it out of the saucepan and put on one side.

Put the shelled green peas in the sauce, adding sufficient water to cover, and cook with the lid on over a moderate heat.

When the green peas are almost cooked, add the pickled lemon zest, cut in pieces, and the olives. Leave the sauce to boil down until it becomes thick.

Be careful not to over-cook the green peas as it would make the sauce too thick.

Just before serving, put the pieces of meat back in the sauce to re-heat, adding a little water if too much liquid has been absorbed by the green peas.

Arrange the meat on a round dish with the green peas on top and decorate with the olives and lemon zest. Pour the sauce over and serve at once.

quince tajine (k'dra)

Ingredients for 8 people

- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)*
- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of quinces*
- *1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)*
- *2 large sliced onions*
- *200 g (7 oz) of butter*
- *salt*

Cut the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz). Rinse and drain. Put in a thick-bottomed saucepan, adding salt, pepper, saffron, one sliced onion and the butter. Cover with water, put the lid on and cook, stirring from time to time.

When the meat is cooked and breaks in the fingers, take it out of the saucepan and put the seeded but unpeeled quinces (halved or quartered according to size) in the sauce. Add the other sliced onion and a little salt. Cover halfway up with water. Keep a close watch on the quinces as some cook faster than others. Take them out of the saucepan as they are cooked. Then let the sauce boil down until it becomes thick. Remove from the heat.

Meat and green pea tajine

Just before serving, put the meat and the quinces back in the saucepan, taking care not to crush the quinces. Re-heat on a low heat. Arrange the meat in a round dish with the quinces on top and pour the sauce over.

quince and honey tajine

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)
1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of quinces
200 g (7 oz) of butter
1 teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixture of packet saffron and crushed flowers)
1 stick of cinnamon
2 large grated onions
2 soupspoonfuls of caster sugar
1 soupspoonful of cinnamon
5 soupspoonfuls of thick honey

Cut the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz). Rinse and place in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, pepper, saffron, the stick of cinnamon, grated onion and butter. Cover with water. Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add a little water if necessary.

When the meat is almost cooked, add sugar and the cinnamon, mix well and when the meat is cooked and can be broken in the fingers, take it out of the saucepan. Put the seeded but unpeeled quinces, halved or quartered according to size, into the sauce. Add the honey and leave to cook over a low heat. Keep a close watch on the quinces as some cook faster than others. Take them out of the sauce as they are cooked, then leave the sauce to boil down until it becomes thick and rich. Put both the meat and the quinces back into the saucepan, the former on one side the latter on the other, and leave to simmer for 10 minutes so that the quinces absorb the sauce.

Serve really hot on a round dish, with the meat at the bottom, then the quinces and finally the sauce over the top.

meat tajine with jerusalem artichokes (M'qualli)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton chops and shoulder or veal knuckle)
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
1 handful of chopped parsley
3/4 ladleful of groundnut oil
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of Jerusalem artichokes
1 pickled lemon
some preserved olives
juice of 1 lemon
salt

Cut the meat up into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz). rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, ginger, saffron and oil and cover with water. Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time, and add water if necessary. Meanwhile peel the Jerusalem artichokes carrefully and cut into pieces the size of a walnut. Place in a bowl of water and vinegar as soon as they are peeled.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take it out of the saucepan and put on one side.

Then rinse the artichokes and put them in the saucepan containing the sauce. Add the chopped parsley and sufficient water to cover and cook with the lid on over a moderate heat. Test the pieces of artichoke frequently and take them out as they are cooked, since some will take longer than others.

When they are cooked, put the meat and vegetables back into the thick-bottomed saucepan.

Add the lemon juice, the preserved olives and the zest of the pickled lemon, cut in quarters. Leave the sauce to boil down until it becomes thick. Check the seasoning and remove from the heat.

Arrange the meat on a large round dish with the artichokes on top. Pour the sauce over and decorate with the olives and lemon zest. Serve hot.

meat tajine with jerusalem artichokes (k'dra)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)*
- *2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of Jerusalem artichokes*
- *1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)*
- *150 g (5 oz) of butter*
- *1 grated onion*
- *1 handful of chopped parsley*
- *juice of 1 lemon*

Cut up the meat in pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and place in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, pepper, saffron, butter and grated onion. Cover with water.

Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time and add water if necessary.

Meanwhile carefully peel the artichokes and cut in pieces the size of a walnut. Put them into a bowl of water and vinegar as soon as they are ready.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take out of the sauce and put on one side.

Rinse the artichokes and put them in the saucepan with the sauce. Add salt and parsley, cover with water and cook with the lid on, over a moderate heat. Test the artichokes frequently as they will not all cook at the same rate. Take out as they are cooked. When they are all cooked, put the meat and the artichokes back in the saucepan, add the lemon juice and boil down until the sauce is of a rich consistency. Check the seasoning and remove from the heat. Serve in a round dish with the Jerusalem artichokes on top of the meat and the sauce poured over.

carrot and meat tajine

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton chops and shoulder or veal knuckle)*
- *2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of carrots*
- *1 teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1 ladleful of groundnut oil*
- *1 crushed garlic clove*
- *salt*
- *1 handful of chopped parsley*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)*
- *1 pickled lemon*
- *10 preserved olives*
- *1/2 to 1 teaglassful of lemon juice (according to taste)*

Cut the carrots in small cubes. Wash and drain.

Cut the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse, and put in thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, ginger, saffron, oil and crushed garlic. Cover with water.

After it has boiled for 30 minutes, add the carrots, stirring well to mix up the spices. Add salt, a handful of chopped parsley. Cook with the lid on, adding sufficient water to cover. When both the meat and carrots are cooked, add the pickled lemon zest, the olives and lemon juice. Let the sauce boil down until it becomes thick, then remove from the heat after first checking the seasoning. Put the pieces of meat in a round dish with the carrots on top and decorate with the zest and olives. Pour the sauce over and serve very hot.

tajine of mqualli besbas (fennel) with meat

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton chops and shoulder or veal knuckle)*
- *2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of fennel*
- *1 teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)*
- *1 garlic clove*
- *3/4 ladleful of groundnut oil*
- *1/2 teaglassful of lemon juice (more or less to taste)*
- *10 preserved olives*
- *1 pickled lemon*
- *1 teaspoonful of flour*

Cut each bulb of fennel in 4 lengthways after having removed the outside pieces. Put in water with a little vinegar.

Cut the meat into pieces about 150 g (5 oz) and put in thick-bottomed saucepan after rinsing. Add salt, saffron, ginger, the crushed garlic, oil and cover with water. Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take it out of the saucepan. Rinse the fennel and put in the sauce. Add sufficient water to cover and cook with the lid on.

When almost cooked, add the pickled lemon zest, cut in quarters, the olives and the lemon juice. Bind the sauce with the flour blended with a little water and let it boil down until it becomes thick. Put the meat back in the sauce without breaking up the pieces of fennel and heat it through. Check the seasoning and remove from the heat. Arrange the meat on a round dish with the fennel on top. Decorate with the olives and lemon zest and pour the sauce over. Serve at once.

"mqualli" meat tajine with red or orange pumpkin

(M'derbel)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton chops and shoulder or veal knuckle)*
- *1 teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)*
- *1 ladleful of groundnut oil*
- *1 crushed garlic clove*
- *1 teaspoonful of flour*
- *6 kg (13 lbs 4 oz) of pumpkin*
- *300 g (11 oz) of caster sugar*
- *1 soupspoonful of cinnamon*

(See recipe for M'derbel chicken and pumpkin tajine, page 78.)

Cut the meat up into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz). rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, saffron, ginger, garlic and oil. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, boil the sauce down until it becomes thick. Bind the sauce with the flour blended with a little water and bring in the boil.

Before serving, re-heat the meat, place the hot pumpkin purée on top and pour the sauce over.

meat and potato tajine (m'qualli)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)*
- *1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)*
- *1 ladleful of groundnut oil*
- *1 crushed garlic clove*
- *12 preserved olives*
- *1 pickled lemon*

First of all be sure to choose a type of potato that will not boil to a mush. Peel and cut them up into pieces the size of a walnut, putting them in a bowl of water as they are prepared.

Cut the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz). Rinse and put in thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, ginger, saffron, garlic and oil. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, remove from the saucepan and put on one side. Rinse the potatoes and put in the saucepan, adding sufficient water to cover, and cook with the lid on.

When the potatoes are almost cooked, add the pickled lemon zest, cut in pieces, and the preserved olives. Let the sauce boil down until it becomes thick. Check the seasoning and put the meat back in the saucepan taking care not to break up the potatoes. Remove from the heat.

Arrange the meat on a round dish with the potatoes on top. Decorate with the lemon zest and olives and cover with the sauce. Serve very hot.

meat and potato tajine (k'dra)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)
1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of potatoes
1 grated onion
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
150 g (5 oz) of butter
1 handful of chopped coriander

First, be sure to choose potatoes that will not boil to a mush. Peel and cut them into pieces the size of a walnut and put in a bowl of water as they are prepared.

Cut the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, pepper, saffron, grated onion and butter. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take it out of the saucepan and put on one side.

Rinse the potatoes and sprinkle with salt, pepper, a pinch of saffron and the chopped coriander. Mix well and put in the sauce. Add enough water to cover and cook with the lid on over a moderate heat. When almost cooked, let the sauce boil down until it becomes thick. Check the seasoning and remove the saucepan from the heat when the potatoes are cooked.

Just before serving, put the meat back in the saucepan without crushing the potatoes and re-heat without boiling down the sauce any further. Arrange the meat and the potatoes on a round dish with the sauce poured over the top and serve at once.

meat and potato tajine (M'chermel)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of potatoes
1 level teaspoonful of ginger

1 pinch of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
1 teaspoonful of paprika
1 level teaspoonful of cumin
2 grated onions
1 handful of chopped parsley and coriander (mixed)
1 ladleful of groundnut oil
1 teaglassful of lemon juice (or more to taste)
1 pickled lemon
10 preserved olives

First of all, make sure that the potatoes are of a type that will not boil down to a mush. Peel and cut them up in pieces the size of a walnut and leave in a bowl of water until required. Cut up the meat in 150 g (5 oz) pieces, rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan, with salt, ginger, saffron, oil and onion. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When the meat is almost cooked, rinse the potatoes, mix with the chopped parsley and coriander, the paprika and cumin and put in the sauce. When the potatoes are cooked, add the pickled lemon zest, as the olives and lemon juice. Leave to simmer a few minutes more until the sauce becomes thick and then remove from the heat.

Arrange the meat on a round dish with the potatoes on top. Decorate with the lemon zest and the olives and pour the sauce over. Serve hot.

meat and turnip tajine (mauve-topped variety) (K'dra)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)
2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of mauve-topped turnips sliced in rounds 3 to 4 cm thick (1" to 1 ½")

Same recipe as for the meat tajine (k'dra) (page 120).

meat tajine with meslalla olives (fresh green olives) (see page 11)

For 1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat cut into pieces weighing 150 g (5 oz), 2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of stoned olives are required.

Same recipe as for "meslalla" chicken (page 77).

meat tajine with almonds and onions (k'dra)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)
200 g (7 oz) of almonds
1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of onions
1 handful of chopped parsley
150 g (5 oz) of butter
1 teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)

Cut up the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse, and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, pepper, saffron, butter, 2 sliced onions and the skinned almonds. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take it out of the sauce and put on one side. Toss the remainder of the onions in the sauce with the chopped parsley, a little salt and a pinch of saffron. Shake the saucepan well to mix all the ingredients and leave to cook with the lid off.

When the onions are cooked but still firm, check the seasoning and remove the saucepan from the heat. The sauce should be thin but not runny.

To re-heat the meat put it back in the saucepan. Arrange it on a round dish with the onions and almonds on top. Cover with the sauce and serve at once.

chick-pea, onion and meat tajine

Same recipe as for the meat tajine with almonds and onions, but replacing the almonds with a glassful of chick-peas, soaked overnight and peeled the next day.

meat and rice tajine with almonds

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)
1 teaspoonful of pepper
1/2 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
2 grated onions
150 g (5 oz) of butter
150 g (5 oz) of almonds
3/4 glassful of polished rice
1 handful of chopped parsley *1/2 teaglassful of lemon juice (or more to taste)*

Cut the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, pepper, saffron, butter, grated onions and peeled almonds. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

Meanwhile cook the rice separately in slightly salted, boiling water.

Cook for 20 minutes, rinse in cold water and strain.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, add the chopped parsley and lemon juice. Boil the sauce down until it becomes thick. Just before serving re-heat the meat separately, using half the sauce to re-heat the rice. This should be done as quickly as possible so that the rice does not become sticky.

Arrange the meat on a round dish with the rice and almonds on top. Pour over the remainder of the sauce and serve at once.

Meat tajine with almonds and onions (K'dra)

cardoon tajine (Kanaria)

Ingredients for 8 to 10 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)
3 or 4 big heads of cardoon
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
1/2 teaspoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
1 ladleful of groundnut oil
1 teaspoonful of olive oil
1 crushed garlic clove
2 pickled lemons
10 preserved olives
1/2 teaglassful of lemon juice (more or less to taste)
salt

String and trim the cardoons after having removed the tips, taking care to remove all the tough parts of the vegetable. Cut into pieces 4 or 5 cm (1 3/4" to 2"), taking off the inner smooth skin each time as you go along. This preparation must be carried out meticulously. To prevent the vegetables discolouring, toss the pieces into a bowl of water with a little vinegar.

Cut the tips of the cardoons in two and prepare in the same way as the stems. Put on one side in a saucepan of water.

Cut up the meat in pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz). Rinse, drain and place in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, garlic, oil, saffron and ginger. Cover with water. Bring to the boil and add the cardoons. Keep the tips. Cover the cardoons completely with water to prevent them discolouring. Cook 30 minutes with the lid on, then add the tips. Check the seasoning and leave to cook without the lid.

When the meat and the cardoons are cooked and tender, which normally takes about 2 hours, add the pickled lemon zest cut in pieces, the preserved olives and the lemon juice. Bind the sauce with a teaspoonful of flour blended with a little water and leave to boil down until the sauce is rich. Remove from the heat.

Arrange the meat on a round dish with the cardoons on top. Decorate with the lemon zest and the olives.

N.B. If there is too much liquid left when the meat and cardoons are cooked, boil it down in a saucepan.

thistle-stem tajine (garnina)

The stems of wild thistles with ragged leaves are white and tender. They take rather a long time to peel. A dozen heads are required to make a tajine with 1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (either shoulder and chops of mutton or veal knuckle).

The recipe is the same as for the cardoon tajine given above.

Cardoon tajine (Kanaria)

wild artichoke-stem tajine

Same recipe as for the cardoon tajine on the preceding page. They are rather more difficult to peel as the stems have thorns on them. The taste is more delicate.

tajine of meat and wild artichokes (k'dra-Tajine)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) meat (mutton chops and shoulder or veal knuckle)
5 kg (11 lbs) of wild artichokes
1/2 teaspoonful of ginger
1 level teaspoonful of pepper
enough cumin to cover the tip of a knife
1/2 ladleful of groundnut oil
100 g (4 oz) of butter
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
1 grated onion
1 handful of chopped parsley
1/2 teaglassful of lemon juice
salt

First peel the artichokes carefully, keeping only the hearts. Put into a bowl of water and vinegar as they are peeled. Cut the meat up into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz) Rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, ginger, pepper, saffron, cumin, 1 grated onion, butter and oil. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add the small onions a little later. Add water if necessary. Leave to simmer until the meat is done.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, remove from the saucepan and put on one side. Take out the onions when cooked as well.

Put the well-rinsed artichoke hearts in the sauce which is still on the heat. Sprinkle lightly with salt, add the chopped parsley and cover with water. Leave to cook on a moderate heat and then add the lemon juice. Let the sauce boil down until it becomes thick and remove from the heat. Put the meat and onions back in the sauce, taking care not to crush the artichokes, and re-heat very gently, before serving. Arrange the meat on a round dish with the artichokes on top. Scatter the small onions over and cover with the sauce.

N.B. Keep the artichoke beard for making curds and hey. Put it out to dry in the sun on a clean cloth several days running and pound in a mortar.

meat tajine with wild artichokes (k'dra)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton chops and shoulder or veal knuckle)
5 kg (11 lbs) of wild artichokes
2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of finely sliced onions
1 handful of chopped parsley
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
150 g (5 oz) of butter
salt

First, peel the artichokes, keeping only the hearts. Put them in a bowl of vinegar and water as they are peeled.

Cut the meat up in pieces of about 150 g (5 oz). Rinse, put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, pepper, saffron, sliced onion and butter. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take it out of the saucepan. Put the well-rinsed artichoke hearts in the meat sauce which is still on the heat. Sprinkle with a little salt, add the chopped parsley and sufficient water to cover. Cook on a moderate heat and then let the sauce boil down until it becomes thick.

Sprinkle a little lemon juice on the artichoke hearts if they have become discoloured. Then put the pieces of meat back in the saucepan, taking care not to crush the artichoke hearts.

Just before serving, arrange the artichokes on top of the meat on a round dish, with the sauce poured over.

meat tajine with wild artichokes (Mqualli)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton chops and shoulder or veal knuckle)
5 kg (11 lbs) of wild artichokes
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
3/4 ladleful of groundnut oil
the zest of 1 pickled lemon

7 or 8 preserved olives
salt

First, peel the artichokes carefully keeping only the hearts. Put them in a bowl of water and vinegar, as they are ready.

Cut the meat up into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz). Rinse, add salt, ginger, saffron and oil. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, take it out of the sauce and put on one side.

Put the well-rinsed artichokes in the sauce which is still on the stove and add sufficient water to cover. Cook on a moderate heat and then add the zest of the pickled lemon and the olives. Let the sauce boil down until it becomes thick.

Put the pieces of meat back in the saucepan, taking care not to crush the artichokes.

Just before serving, arrange the artichokes on top of the meat in a round dish, pour the sauce over and serve hot.

meat tajine with artichokes and green peas

Ingredients for 6 or 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton chops and shoulder or veal knuckle)
2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of artichokes
1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of green peas
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
10 preserved olives
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
1 crushed garlic clove
1 ladleful of groundnut oil
zest of 1 pickled lemon
salt

Peel the artichokes carefully, keeping only the hearts. Put them in a bowl of water and vinegar as they are ready.
Shell the green peas and put on one side.
Cut up the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz). Rinse, and put in thick-bottomed saucepan with the salt, ginger, saffron, garlic and oil. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add a little water if necessary.
When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, remove it from the saucepan. Rinse the green peas and add therm to the sauce. Cook with the lid on. When the peas are almost cooked, add the artichoke hearts and water if necessary.
When the artichokes are cooked, put the meat back in the saucepan with the lemon zest, cut in pieces, and the olives. Let the sauce boil down until it becomes thick. Arrange the vegetables on top of the meat on a round dish. Decorate with the olives and lemon zest and cover with the sauce. Serve hot.

meat tajine with artichokes (K'dra tajine or k'dra or Mqualli)

Cultivated artichokes can be used in place of wild ones in the three recipes on pages 126 and 127.

meat tajine with fried aubergines

Ingredients for 1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle) enough for 6 to 8 people

2 ½ kg (5 lbs 8 oz) of aubergines
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
1/2 ladleful of groundnut oil
1 crushed garlic clove
1 teaglassful of lemon juice, of which
2/3 for the fried aubergines
1/3 for the sauce
salt

For the recipe see chicken with fried aubergines, page 75.

kebab maghdour tajine

Kabab Maghdour means the "betrayed" kabab.
The almost meatless bones that are cut out of the joints of meat to be cut up for kebab recipes are used to make this tajine. In addition, any pieces of mutton or veal, from the rib, shoulder or leg, etc., can be used, cut into pieces about the size of a hen's egg.

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people
1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat
100 g (4 oz) of butter
1 teaspoonful of paprika
1 level teaspoonful of cumin
chilli to taste
1 teaspoonful of flour

Cut up the meat, rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, paprika, chilli, cumin and butter. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.
When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, boil down the sauce until it thickens. Bind, if necessary, with a little flour blended with water, bring to the boil and remove from the heat. Serve piping hot in a slaoui tajine.

kebab maghdour tajine with eggs

Prepare in the same way as kabab Maghdour above.
Just before serving, re-heat in the saloui tajin on a gentle heat and break a few eggs over the top. Sprinkle with a little salt and remove from the heat when the whites are set. Serve piping hot.

meat tajine (Tiab l'sane)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people
1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat taken from any part of mutton or veal joints
2 onions
1 teaspoonful of paprika
100 g (4 oz) of butter
and after the meat is cooked:
1/2 teaspoonful of cumin
1 heaped teaspoonful of crushed coriander seeds
1/2 teaglassful of vinegar

Cut up the meat into pieces the size of a hen's egg. Rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, grated onions, paprika and butter. Cover with water, and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

When almost cooked, add the cumin and crushed coriander seeds, together with the vinegar. Boil down to a thick sauce. Remove from the heat when the meat is cooked and can be broken off easily in the fingers.

Serve very hot in a slaoui tajin.

"mqualli" meat tajine

Ingredients for 6 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton chops and shoulder or veal knuckle)
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
1 whole onion
1 crushed garlic clove
1/2 ladleful of groundnut oil
50 g (2 oz) of butter
10 preserved olives
1 teaspoonful of flour
1 pickled lemon

Cut the meat up into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, ginger, saffron, oil, butter, crushed garlic and the small whole onion. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary. Take out the onion when it is cooked.

When the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers, sieve the onions finely or blend in an electric mixer with a little sauce. Add the teaspoonful of flour and pour into the sauce stirring rapidly. Add the zest of pickled lemon cut into quarters and the preserved olives. Leave the sauce to boil down until it becomes thick.

Arrange the meat on a round dish and decorate it with the olives and lemon zest. Swirl the sauce round in the saucepan and then pour it over the meat. Serve at once.

m'hammer meat tajine

Ingredients for 6 people

1 1/2 kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of mutton chops
1 soupspoonful of paprika
1 teaspoonful of cumin
1 crushed garlic clove
100 g (4 oz) of butter for cooking the meat
100 g (4 oz) of butter with 1/2 ladleful of oil for frying
1 teaspoonful of flour

Cut the meat up into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with the salt, paprika, cumin, crushed garlic and butter. Cover with water and cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add a little water if necessary. When the meat is cooked but still firm enough to be fried, bind the sauce with a teasponful of flour blended with water. Bring to the boil and then leave to boil down to a rich consistency.

20 minutes before serving, fry the pieces of meat golden brown all over in the butter and oil mixture in a frying pan. Then arrange the meat on a heated dish. Add a soupspoonful of the frying fat to the sauce, stirring the saucepan with a brisk circular movement, and pour it over the meat. Serve at once.

m'chermel meat tajine

Ingredients for 6 people

- *1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton chops and shoulder or veal knuckle)*
- *1 level teaspoonful of ginger*
- *1 good pinch of saffron*
- *4 medium-sized grated onions*
- *3/4 ladleful of groundnut oil*
- *1 teaspoonful of paprika*
- *1 level teaspoonful of cumin*
- *1 handful of chopped parsley and coriander*
- *10 preserved olives*
- *1 pickled lemon*

Cut the meat up into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz). Rinse and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, ginger, saffron, grated onion and oil. Cover with water and cook with the lid on. Stir from time to time and add water if necessary.

When the meat is almost cooked, add the parsley and coriander, the paprika and cumin. Leave the sauce to boil down until it becomes thick and the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers. Add the lemon juice, the pickled lemon zest, cut in pieces, and the preserved olives. Boil for a few seconds, check the seasoning and remove from the heat.

Serve the meat on a round dish decorated with the pickled lemon zest and olives and cover with the sauce. Serve hot.

tfaïa meat tajine (with eggs and almonds)

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat (mutton shoulder and chops or veal knuckle)
200 g (7 oz) of almonds
6 hard-boiled eggs
1 teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
2 grated onions
1 small bunch of coriander tied together
1 heaped soupspoonful of chopped coriander
150 g (5 oz) of butter

The Tfaïa tajine is the traditional dish prepared for weddings, circumcisions and other important festivities.

Cut the meat into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz) rinse, and put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, pepper, butter, saffron, grated onions, skinned almonds and a small bunch of coriander which should be removed when the meat is done.

Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.

Towards the end of cooking, add the chopped coriander and boil down the sauce until it becomes thick. Remove from the heat when the meat is cooked and breaks off easily in the fingers.

Re-heat just before serving and arrange in a round dish with the almonds and the hard-boiled eggs cut in half lengthways on top. Pour the sauce over.

N.B. The almonds can be fried in oil just before serving and added to the dish at the last minute, instead of being cooked with the meat.

sweet tajines

mrouzia tajine

Mrouzia is the traditional dish for Aïd el Kebir (sheep festival).
Pieces of mutton for this recipe should be chosen from the saddle, best end of neck or shoulder.
This dish which is rich with savoury spices, both pungent and mild, can be kept in a refrigerator for several days.

Ingredients for 6 to 8 people

1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of meat
300 g (11 oz) of stoned raisins
200 g (7 oz) of almonds
2 medium-sized grated onions
1 level soupspoonful of ras el hanout (see chapter on spices, page 8)
1 heaped teaspoonful of ginger
1/2 teaspoonful of saffron (mixed packet saffron and crushed flowers)
1 heaped teaspoonful of cinnamon
200 g (7 oz) of butter
1 ladleful of honey

Cut the meat up in pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz), rinse and drain. Mix the Ras El Hanout, ginger, saffron and pepper with a little water.
Coat the meat with half this mixture and put it in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Add salt, butter, skinned almonds and grated onions. Cover with water. Cook with the lid on, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.
Clean and rinse the raisins and leave to steep in the other half of the spice mixture.

Mrouzia tajine

When the meat is almost cooked, add the honey, raisins and cinnamon. Remove from the heat when the meat breaks off easily in the fingers and the sauce is rich.
Arrange the meat on a round dish with the raisins and almonds on top. Cover with the honey sauce and serve.

meat and onion tajine (Kammama)

The recipe is the same as for Kammama chicken (see page 83) but using 1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of either leg or shoulder of mutton.
Add the onion rings only when the meat is half cooked (after about 1 hour).

meat and prune tajine

Same recipe as for chicken with prunes (pages 80) the ingredients being identical for 1 1/2 kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of either chine or shoulder of mutton, cut in pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz).

meat and date tajine

Ingredients for 1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of shoulder or rib of mutton, cut into pieces weighing about 150 g (5 oz)

750 g (1 lb 10 oz) of very fresh Tafilalet dates
1 soupspoonful of grilled sesame seeds
200 g (7 oz) of almonds
1 heaped teaspoonful of pepper
1 coffeespoonful of saffron (mixed packed saffron and crushed flowers)
1 stick of cinnamon *200 g (7 oz) of butter*
2 soupspoonfuls of thick honey
2 medium-sized grated onions *1 heaped teaspoonful of cinnamon*

Rinse the pieces of meat, put in a thick-bottomed saucepan, with salt, pepper, saffron, grated onions, butter and the stick of cinnamon. Cover with water and cook on a moderate heat, stirring from time to time. Add water if necessary.
Towards the end of cooking, when the meat is almost tender, add the honey and cinnamon. Allow to boil down, turning the pieces of meat over so that they are impregnated with the honey sauce. Remove the meat from the saucepan. Put the well-rinsed dates in the sauce, adding a little water if the sauce is too thick, and simmer for about 10 minutes. Put the pieces of meat back in the sauce to re-heat, taking care not to crush the dates. The sauce should be thick and rich. Remove from the heat after checking the seasoning.
It is advisable to put the dates on to cook at the last minute so that they remain whole and firm.
Skin the almonds and fry in oil 15 minutes before serving. Re-heat the date tajine on a slow heat, then arrange on a round dish with the dates on top of the meat and the fried almonds and grilled sesame seeds scattered over the top. Pour the sauce over and serve.

salads

There are two types of salad, cooked and raw.
The quantities are intended for an average plateful.

raw salads

sweet pepper salad

1 lb of sweet peppers
1 level teaspoonful of cumin
1 pinch of ground chilli
3 soupspoonfuls of lemon juice
2 soupspoonfuls of olive oil
1 soupspoonful of groundnut oil
1 small bunch of chopped parsley
salt

Grill the peppers and take off the skins. Cut into dice and add salt, cumin, lemon, oil, chopped parsley and chilli. Mix well and serve cold.

tomato and sweet pepper salad

3 peppers
2 tomatoes
3 soupspoonfuls of lemon juice
1 level teaspoonful of cumin
3 soupspoonfuls of groundnut oil
1 small bunch of chopped parsley
salt

Grill the peppers and remove the skins. Rinse the tomatoes, skin, cut in half and remove the seeds. Cut the tomatoes and peppers into dice. Add salt, lemon, cumin, chopped parsley and oil. Mix and serve cold.

salad of olives (Meslalla) (preparation page 11)

1 soup-bowlful of washed and stoned olives
the juice of 2 lemons
1 teaspoonful of paprika
1 good pinch of ground chilli
1/2 teaspoonful of cumin
1 crushed garlic clove
2 soupspoonfuls of groundnut oil
1 handful of finely chopped parsley
salt

Mix all the ingredients together after having pressed the olives to rid them of the water. Leave to stand at least 2 hours before serving.

fennel salad

Cut the fennel hearts into very fine rings lengthways. Wash and drain. Place all around a dish. Prepare a salad dressing with salt, pepper, lemon. groundnut oil and a trace of mustard. Season the fennel.

grated carrot salad with oranges

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1 lb of carrots
2 oranges
1 pinch of salt
1 soupspoonful of orange-flower water
1 heaped soupspoonful of caster sugar
the juice of 1 lemon

Peel and cut the carrots lengthways. Take out the heart, wash and drain.
Mix the salt, orange-flower water, sugar and lemon juice. Grate the carrots into this and mix well. Add the oranges cut into slices with the pith removed and serve very cold.

feggous salad

The *Feggous* is a variety of cucumber which is long, thin and often curved. It is much drier than the ordinary cucumber.
Wash 1 lb of feggous. Taste the tail-end of each fruit and throw any bitter ones away. Grate with a fine grater, add a pinch of salt, a teaspoonful of crushed zaater (a kind of thyme), 2 soupspoonfuls of vinegar and 2 soupspoonfuls of sugar. Mix and serve cold.

cos lettuce and orange salad

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2 cos lettuces
2 oranges
the juice of a third one
2 soupspoonfuls of lemon juice
1 good soupspoonful of caster sugar
1 soupspoonful of orange-flower water
1 teaspoonful of groundnut oil
1 pinch of salt

Use only the hearts and tender leaves of the lettuces. Wash thoroughly and drain. Pile the leaves one on top of the other and cut them into thin strips, about 1/10" (3 mm) wide. Add salt, sugar, orange-flower water, lemon and orange juice, oil. Mix and add the oranges (sliced with the pith removed). Serve very cold.

lemon salad

Thinly peel 2 very ripe lemons, put whole in a little salt water and place on one side. Chop a small bunch of parsley, add a teaspoonful of paprika, a pinch of ground chilli, 1/2 teaspoonful of cumin, 5 or 6 violet olives (machcouq), 8 black olives (all stoned), 3 soupspoonfuls of groundnut oil and enough salt to season.
Then take the prepared lemons and press out the juice. Do not throw them away. Cut the lemons up in pieces the size of the olives and mix well all the ingredients, adding half of the lemon juice. Serve at once.

salad of grated long radishes with orange

3 long medium-sized radishes
2 soupspoonfuls of lemon juice
1 soupspoonful of caster sugar
1 orange
1 soupspoonful of orange-flower water
1 pinch of salt

Wash the radishes and place in a bowl of water for 1 hour. Change the water from time to time.

Meanwhile mix the salt, orange-flower water and lemon juice. Just before serving, strain the radishes, grate finely and mix with the dressing. Add an orange cut into thin slices with the pith removed.

cooked salads

cooked carrot salad

1 lb of carrots
1 garlic clove
1 teaspoonful of paprika
1 level teaspoonful of cumin
2 soupspoonfuls of vinegar
1 handful of chopped parsley
1 soupspoonful of groundnut oil
salt

Peel the carrots, remove the heart and cut either in rings or lengthways. Wash and cook in salt water with a clove of garlic. Strain when cooked, season with the above spices, add the parsley, and mix gently so that the carrots are not broken up. Leave to get cold.

aubergine salad

For 1 lb of aubergines the preparation and ingredients are the same as the cooked carrot salad but omitting the parsley. Rather small aubergines should be chosen and they should be cut in 4 lengthways, including the stalks, without being peeled. Leave to get cold before serving.

tomato and cooked pepper salad

Time of preparation: 30 minutes
Cooking time: 1 ½ hours
3 kg (6 lbs 10 oz) of tomatoes
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of sweet peppers
2 or 3 small hot peppers
1 good handful of chopped parsley
1 soupspoonful of paprika
1 pickled lemon cut in quarters (use the zest only)
3/4 ladleful of groundnut oil
1 crushed garlic clove
salt

Cut the tomatoes into pieces after having peeled and seeded them (never put tomatoes through a vegetable sieve). Cook with the salt, paprika, garlic and oil but do not add any water. Bring to the boil and lower the heat. Stir often and boil down until there is no liquid left. Brown this tomato puree in the oil while stirring. While the tomatoes are cooking, grill, peel and dice the peppers. Cut up the pickled lemon in the same way.

When the oil in which the tomatoes have been cooked reappears, add the sweet peppers together with the chopped parsley and pickled lemon, and leave to cook for another 15 minutes, stirring constantly. Then remove from the heat. This salad should be eaten when quite cold and can be kept several days.

fried sweet pepper and tomato salad

Wash and wipe 4 peppers and 4 tomatoes. Fry first the peppers then the seeded tomato halves in boiling oil in a frying pan. Peel the vegetables carefully when fried. Cut the peppers in 2 lengthways and arrange, alternating with the tomatoes, on a dish. Then prepare the following sauce.

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4 soupspoonfuls of the frying fat
3 soupspoonfuls of lemon juice
1 level teaspoonful of cumin
salt

Add salt, mix well and pour over the dish. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and leave to cool.

beetroot salad

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500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of beetroot
1/2 teaspoonful of paprika
1 pinch of cinnamon, 1 pinch of cumin
1 heaped soupspoonful of caster sugar
2 soupspoonfuls of orange-flower water
1 full glass of the beetroot stock
salt 1/2 lemon juice
1/2 lemon juice

Peel the beetroots. rinse and cook covered in water. When cooked (in about 2 hours) take off the heat and keep the stock. Slice the beetroots finely, put in a salad bowl and salt lightly. Pour over a glassful of the stock together with the ingredients listed above. Mix well and leave to cool.

mallow salad .(bekkoula)

Bekkoula is a spring plant with large green leaves, rather like spinach.
When not in season it can be replaced with ordinary parsley in the same quantities. The taste is still delicious.

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4 heaped soupbowls of chopped bekkoula
2 heaped soupbowls of chopped parsley
1 heaped soupbowl of chopped coriander
1 heaped soupbowl of chopped celery leaves
3 garlic cloves
1 soupspoonful of paprika
1 good pinch of ground chilli
3 soupspoonfuls of groundnut oil
1 soupspoonful of olive oil (optional)
1/2 pickled lemon (zest only)
1 handful of preserved olives
1 teaglassful of lemon juice
salt

Make little bunches of the bekkoula, parsley, coriander and celery, taking out the weeds. Chop it all up, little by little, adding a few stalks. Put the chopped herbs in the top of a couscous steamer, wash with a lot of water and strain. Then cook in a small, thick-bottomed saucepan with the cloves of garlic left whole, without adding any water. When the chopped up herbs can be crushed easily, the bekkoula is cooked. Take out the garlic cloves and skin them. Crush them and put them back in the saucepan, adding the salt, paprika, chilli, and oil and stir over the heat until the water has completely evaporated. Add the lemon juice, preserved olives and pickled lemon zest cut into quarters. Leave a few more minutes on the heat, stirring constantly. Check the seasoning and remove from the heat. Arrange on a dish decorated with the olives and lemon zest. Leave to cool before eating.

sweet potato salad with sugar

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of sweet potatoes
1 pinch of salt
1/2 teaspoonful of pepper
1 good pinch of saffron
1 knob of butter the size of a walnut
3 soupspoonfuls of groundnut oil
1/2 teaspoonful of cinnamon
1 heaped soupspoonful of sugar

Peel the sweet potatoes and cut in quarters. Wash and cook with all the ingredients above with the lid on. When the sweet potatoes are cooked, leave to boil down if necessary until a syrupy sauce is produced. Serve hot or cold.

sweet potato salad without sugar

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of sweet potatoes
1 chopped onion
1 good pinch of saffron
1/2 teaspoonful of ginger
5 soupspoonfuls of oil
1 good pinch of cumin
1 soupspoonful of chopped parsley and coriander
1 teaspoonful of paprika
4 soupspoonfuls of lemon juice
1 pickled lemon (zest only)
6 or 7 preserved olives
salt

First cook the onion with the oil, salt, saffron, ginger and add a glassful of water.
Then add the sweet potatoes, cut in quarters. Cover halfway up with water. They cook very quickly so keep a close watch on them. Then add the cumin, paprika, chopped coriander and parsley, lemon juice and the olives and lemon zest cut in quarters. When the sauce has reduced by half and is creamy, remove from the heat. Leave to get cold.

N.B. Do not let the sauce become too thick as it will thicken even further while cooling.

fresh kidney-bean salad

2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of fresh kidney-beans
2 teaspoonfuls of paprika
1 crushed garlic clove
5 soupspoonfuls of groundnut oil
1 handful of chopped coriander
3 soupspoonfuls of lemon juice
1/2 pickled lemon (zest only)
6 or 7 preserved olives
salt

Take the shoots off the kidney-beans but do not peel them. Put in a thick-bottomed saucepan with salt, garlic, paprika and oil. Cover with water to prevent the kidney-beans from becoming discoloured.

When they are almost cooked add the chopped coriander and when completely cooked the lemon juice, olives and lemon zest cut in pieces. Leave to boil down until the sauce is creamy. Bind if necessary with a teaspoonful of flour mixed with a little water. Leave to simmer a few more minutes, taste to check the seasoning and remove from the heat. Arrange on a dish and decorate with the olives and lemon zest. Leave to get cold.

green pea salad

Same preparation as for the kidney-beans above (see page 141). For 1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of green peas use the same quantities as in the preceding recipe.

marrow salad

1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of marrows
1 good teaspoonful of paprika
1 chopped garlic clove
4 soupspoonfuls of groundnut oil
1/2 teaspoonful of cumin
2 soupspoonfuls of lemon juice
salt

Cut the marrows in 4 lengthways without peeling them. Seed them and cut into 2 cm (1") cubes. Wash and put in a saucepan with salt, garlic, paprika and oil. Cover with water and leave to cook. When the marrows are cooked, add the cumin and lemon juice. Leave to boil down until the sauce is creamy and take off the heat. Serve cold.

N.B. The courgettes (baby marrows) cook quite quickly so do not put too much water in at first. Take care that they do not overcook.

salad of slaouia marrows

The "Slaouia" marrow is long and pitcher-shaped, pale green and without veins.

1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of marrows
1 teaspoonful of paprika
1 garlic clove
4 soupspoonfuls of groundnut oil
1 good pinch of cumin
2 soupspoonfuls of vinegar
salt

Scrape the green skin off the Slaouia marrows carefully then cut in half lengthways and remove the seeds. Cut into small dice. Wash and cook with salt, oil, paprika, garlic and a glassful of water. Bring to the boil and lower the heat. Watch over the marrows as they cook and add a little water if necessary. When they are cooked add vinegar and cumin and leave to boil down until all the liquid has evaporated. Take off the heat and leave to get cold.

saalouk salad

2 aubergines
3 to 4 medium-sized marrows
4 sweet peppers
4 tomatoes
2 small hot peppers
3/4 ladleful of groundnut oil
1 level soupspoonful of paprika
salt

Cut up the courgettes and aubergines small without peeling them. Wash and put in a saucepan with salt, oil, paprika and the crushed garlic. Cover with water. Then peel the tomatoes, remove the seeds and cut into 4, and add to the contents of the saucepan. Leave to cook on a moderate heat, stirring from time to time.

When almost cooked, add the grilled peppers which have been washed and diced. Leave to boil down, stirring all the time, until there is no liquid left. The salad can be eaten hot or cold and keeps for 2 or 3 days.

puddings

steamed rice

Ingredients for 8 to 10 people
Time to prepare: 1 hour (approximately)
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of polished rice
100 g (4 oz) of butter
1 soupspoonful of groundnut oil
salt

Coat the rice with 1 soupspoonful of oil and place in the upper part of the couscous steamer, the lower one containing boiling water. Make the join between the two parts airtight by binding with a cloth steeped in flour and water. Once the rice begins to steam, cook for 10 minutes and then remove from the heat. Rinse the rice in cold water and leave to stand spread out in a "gsâà". Then put the rice back to steam as before for 5 minutes. Take off the heat, rinse again in cold water, leave to stand for 5 minutes again in the "gsâà" before steaming for the third time. Then remove from the heat, pour into the "gsâà", add a heaped teaspoonful of salt and 25 g (1 oz) of butter. Put back on the heat for the fourth time, remove from the heat after five minutes and add 25 g (1 oz) of butter. Put back on the heat for the fifth and last time. Turn out when the swollen grains are well cooked. Add the remaining butter 50 g (2 oz) to the rice. Arrange in a dome on a round dish. decorate with cinnamon and serve with separate bowls of caster sugar and fresh. unboiled milk.

rice pudding made with milk

Cooking time: about 1 hour; Ingredients for 10 people
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of polished rice
1 ½ litres (3 pts) of water
3 ½ litres (6 pts) of milk
2 good teaspoonfuls of salt
350 to 400 g (13 to 14 oz) of caster sugar (to taste)
1 knob of butter the size of a walnut
1/2 teaglassful of orange-flower water

Wash the rice thoroughly in a lot of water and drain. Put in 1 1/2 litres (3 pts) of cold water and bring to the boil, stirring from time to time, until the rice has absorbed all the water. Then add the salt, sugar, butter and milk. Bring back to the boil and a few minutes later add the orange-flower water, taking good care to stir often so that the rice does not stick to the bottom.

Steamed rice

When the saucepan is taken off the heat the milk should be like fresh cream, thick but runny, and the rice should be swollen. Leave to cool, stirring occasionally to prevent a skin forming on the top. If the rice is too thick when cold add 1/2 litre (1 pt) of cold, scalded milk.

N.B. Be careful not to let the rice boil dry as it cooks. In fact be careful to take it off the heat when still sufficiently runny so that it will be creamy when set.

vermicelli milk pudding

Ingredients for 8 to 10 people; cooking time: 30 minutes
1 litre (2 pts) of water
2 litres (4 pts) of milk
1 knob of buter the size of a walnut
1 good teaspoonful of salt
8 soupspoonfuls of caster sugar
400 g (14 oz) of vermicelli
2 soupspoonfuls of orange-flower water

Put the milk and water on to boil and add the salt, butter and sugar. As it comes to the boil, add the vermicelli and stir gently. Leave to cook for 10 minutes then remove from the heat after adding the orange-flower water.

semolina pudding with milk

Ingredients for 8 to 10 people; Cooking time: 30 to 45 minutes
2 litres (4 pts) of hot water
1 heaped soup bowl of coarse semolina
2 litres (4 pts) of milk
1 good teaspoonful of salt
1 knob of butter the size of a walnut
8 soupspoonfuls of caster sugar
1/2 teaglassful of orange-flower water

Put the semolina into hot (not boiling) water. Add salt and stir. Cook on a low heat, stirring often, for about half an hour.

Then add the milk, sugar, orange-flower water and butter. Leave to boil for 15 to 20 minutes and remove from the heat.

lââssida (Semolina cooked in water)

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of coarse semolina
30 g (1 oz) of butter to cook with the semolina
50 to 100 g (2 to 4 oz) of butter (to add afterwards)
3 litres (5 pts) of water
salt
honey to taste

Put the semolina in hot (but not boiling) water, stir and bring to the boil over a moderate heat. Add the butter and a little salt. Cook for half an hour after it comes to the boil, stirring constantly.

When cooked the lââssida should be quite thick. Pour at once into a deep dish while still boiling hot. Top with little knobs of butter and a few spoonfuls of honey. Serve immediately. Also serve a pot of honey separately from which people can help themselves.

Lââssida is a dish generally served for breakfast on the feast of Aid El Mouloud.

herbel (wheat cooked in milk)

Ingredients for 10 people

- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of hard wheat*
- *3 litres (5 pts) of water*
- *3 litres (5 pts) of milk*
- *1 soupspoonful of salt*
- *1 heaped ladleful of caster sugar, or more to taste*
- *1 knob of butter the size of a walnut*
- *1/2 teaglassful of orange-flower water*

The wheat should be coarsely crushed in a mortar (mehraz), rubbed firmly and freed from husks. It can be bought ready prepared in shops. Clean, wash in lots of water and drain the wheat the evening before. Put in a saucepan with 3 litres (5 pts) of water and bring to the boil. Leave to simmer, with the lid on, over charcoal embers or in a very slow oven all night long (8 or 9 hours) without stirring at all. The next day bring the milk to the boil, stir the cooked wheat with a skimmer and add the boiling milk gradually, stirring all the time. Add the salt, sugar, orange-flower water and the butter. Put back over a moderate heat (not in the oven). Leave to simmer a few minutes and remove from the heat. Eat either hot or cold.

ceffa couscous

Ingredients for 8 to 10 people

- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of coarse semolina*
- *150 g (5 oz) of butter*
- *salt*
- *cinnamon, icing sugar, fresh milk*

Put the semolina in the "gsââ", coat with 2 soupsoonfuls of oil and add a heaped teaspoonful of salt. Gradually sprinkle this semolina with 1/2 glassful of water, rolling it with the palm of the hand.

Put in the upper part of a couscous steamer with the lower part full of boiling water. When the steam starts to come off the couscous, leave it to cook for 30 minutes then remove from the heat. Put the semolina back in the "gsââ", add 50 g (2 oz) of butter, leave to cool and sprinkle with 3 teaglassfuls of water. Leave to stand so that the grains absorb all the liquid. Cook over the steam a second time for 15 minutes, repeating the first operation, working in 50 g (2 oz) of butter and 3 teaglassfuls of water.

Cook over the steam a third time for 20 to 25 minutes before serving. When the steam begins to escape, take off the heat, pour into the "gsââ" and add another 50 g (2 oz) of butter and 3 teaglasses of cold water.

Arrange on a dish in a dome shape. Decorate with cinnamon and eat with icing sugar and fresh milk, served in separate bowls.

Optional: two thin layers of fried almonds, coarsely pounded in a mortar, can be placed inside the "ceffa".

saycouk couscous

"Saycouk" is a type of couscous which has not been moistened, that is, there is no sauce with it. It is eaten with a kind of whey, known as "Lben" (see recipe page 155).

For 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of coarse semolina rolled with 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of hard wheat flour and sieved through a silk sieve (see recipe page 22) 75 g (3 oz) of butter and 1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of fresh kidney-beans are required.

Put the couscous in the upper part of the couscous steamer, with the lower part full of boiling water. Cook for the first time for 30 minutes after the couscous begins to steam. Remove from the heat and turn out in a "gsââ". Crush lightly to separate the grains, add salt and leave to get cold.

Then moisten with 2 large glassfuls of water (approximately), depending on the amount the semolina absorbs. Leave to stand until the couscous has absorbed all the liquid. Then cook a second time for 15 minutes.

Take off the heat and turn out into the "gsââ". Add the 75 g (3 oz) of butter and the kidney-beans which have been cooked in salt water after removing their shoots.

Arrange in a dome on a large dish serve with caster sugar and "Lben".

steamed vermicelli

Same preparation as for "Chââriya medfouna" (see page 33). Steamed vermicelli is eaten with caster sugar and fresh, unboiled milk, served in separate bowls.

pancakes or rghaïfs

ouadnine el kadi rghaïfs (the judge's ears)

Ingredients for about 40 rghaifs
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of flour (see preparation of Rghaif dough, page 14)

Shape about 40 balls of dough the size of an apricot and put on the slightly oiled table or "gsââ".

Take the first ball, stretch it out and flatten it with lightly oiled finger tips. Stretch it both lengthways and sideways so as to make a square layer of pastry the thickness of a sheet of paper. Fold this layer in 3, folding one side over the other and fold the rectangle thus obtained in 3 again, to form a square 10 cm (4″).

Repeat this operation with all the balls of dough, in the order in which they were shaped, oiling the table and finger tips fairly often.

to cook:

Place the frying pan on a moderate heat. Take the first square of pastry and stretch it out in both directions until it is double in size. Lay out flat in the lightly oiled pan. Cook on both sides and repeat this operation with all the little squares of pastry.

The Rghaifs are normally cooked in an earthenware pan over charcoal but they can just as well be cooked in a thick iron pan on a gas or electric cooker over a moderate heat.

Just before serving, melt 100 g (4 oz) of butter in the pan. Put in a dish close at hand. Quickly dip the first pancake in this butter, put on a dish and put on top a pancake which has not been dipped in butter.

Continue this operation, placing alternately a buttered pancake on top of a plain one. Put this pile of pancakes back in the frying pan, without any butter, to re-heat, turning the pile over once.

Then spread the pancakes out on a dish containing caster sugar and cinnamon and serve at once. The pancakes can also be served as they are, either with sugar or hot honey.

mlaoui

Ingredients for about 20 Mlaoui
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of flour (see recipe for Rghaif dough, page 14)

Shape about 20 balls of dough the size of a medium tangerine. Take the first ball, first oiling a corner of the table and the finger tips. Spread the dough, stretching it out lengthways and sideways to make a square of pastry as thick as a sheet of paper. Fold into 3, one side over the other, to form an oblong about 40 cm (16″) long. Stretch this elastic ribbon of pastry lightly, rolling it out at the same time. Roll it up like a carpet, stretching it at the same time. Place this cylinder upright on the table and flatten slightly.

Prepare the other balls in the same way in the same order that they were shapped, oiling the table and finger tips often.

To cook:

Place the frying pan on a fairly hot heat, flatten the first cylinder to make a circle, the thickness of strong cardboard (2 to 3 mm, about 1/10″) and lay flat in the pan with scarcely any butter.

Cook on both sides, removing them from the pan with the help of a knife. Split the pancake through the middle to make 2 rounds, fastened together at one point. Begin the operation again until all the cylinders of pastry are cooked.

Mlaouis are generally cooked in an earthenware pan over a charcoal fire but can just as well be cooked in a thick iron pan on a gas or electric cooker over a moderate heat.

Just before serving, melt about 100 g (4 oz) of butter in the pan. Quickly dip one side only of each pancake in the butter and place them one on top of the other in a dish.

Then place this pile of Mlaouis in the pan with scarcely any butter and re-heat quickly, turning them over once.

Serve hot with honey or caster sugar to taste.

mlaoui with khlii (see preparation for khlii page 12)

For about 20 Mlaouis
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of flour (see preparation of Rghaif dough, page 14)
1 piece of khlii cut up and crumbled

Same preparation as for the ordinary Mlaouis but put khlii crumbs on the rectangles of pastry before rolling them into cylinders and flattening to make Mlaouis.

rghaïfs fried in oil

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of flour about 40 Rghaifs

Prepare the Rghaif dough (see page 14), shape the little squares as described for Ouadine El Kadi, flatten lightly and fry 4 or 5 at a time in boiling oil.

Fry on both sides, turning them over, until golden brown and then drain. Serve with sugar or hot honey to taste.

rghaïfs stuffed with almond paste

Ingredients for about 40 Rghaifs

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of flour (to make the Rghaif dough, see page 14)
250 g (9 oz) of almonds
175 g (6 oz) of caster sugar
1 white of egg
1 heaped spoonful of cinnamon, sugar or honey to taste

Almond paste for stuffing:

Skin the almonds and pass through a meat mincer three times with the sugar. Mix with the egg white and cinnamon. Knead the mixture hard.

Preparation:

Prepare the Rghaif dough (see page 14). Shape about 40 balls the size of an apricot. Oil a corner of the table on which the first ball of dough is to be stretched out. Stretch out and flatten with oiled finger tips until a square the thickness of a sheet of paper is obtained.

Spread a piece of almond paste the size of a walnut on this layer of pastry. Fold first in 3, folding one side over on the other, then fold this rectangle into 3 again to make a square about 10 cm (4").

When all the squares are stuffed, flatten slightly with the finger tips, and fry 4 or 5 at a time in boiling oil. Fry until golden brown on both sides and drain for a few minutes before serving with sugar or honey to taste.

N.B. These Rghaifs can also be dipped in hot honey before being served.

mekhtamrine rghaïfs

The following ingredients are required to make about 30 pancakes

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of flour
25 g (1 oz) of yeast
honey butter
1 teaspoonful of salt
luke-warm water

Sieve the flour and make a dough the consistency of bread dough. Knead well for about 20 minutes. Shape into a big ball. Sprinkle a little flour on the table and put the ball of dough on it, sprinkling more flour on top. Roll out with a rolling pin, turning the dough over several times until it is about 1/2 cm (1/3") thick.

Cut out rounds of pastry with a plain pastry-cutter or a glass with a thin rim. Cut out all the dough.

Roll out each of these rounds on the floured table, turning over several times, sprinkling carefully with flour, and then place these pancakes flat on the table. They should be the thickness of thin cardboard, about 1 mm (1/20").

To cook:

Place an earthenware pan on charcoal embers (Maqla dial Trab). The embers should be burning quite strongly. Leave the pan to heat. Carefully pick up the first pancake, shake off the flour and lay out flat in the pan. Heat through and turn over twice. Normally, if the pancake has been made successfully, it should not bubble, but blow up like a small balloon. At this stage, turn it over for the last time and remove from the pan. Open out immediately to make 2 circles fastened together at one point.

If there are one or two bubbles in the pancake it will not rise. Stop up these holes by pressing gently with a cloth and leave to rise. Wipe the pan and cook the other pancakes, in the same order that they were prepared. Put in piles on a clean cloth.

Just before serving, melt a good-sized piece of butter in a pan with a teaglassful of honey and 2 or 3 spoonfuls of orangeflower water. When hot, dip the pancakes in this mixture so that they are well covered, leave to heat for a few minutes and serve at once.

N.B. The honey can be replaced by sugar which can be melted, like the honey, in the butter.

metlouh

This is a large pancake of the same family as the Mekhtamrine Rghaifs.

After kneading the dough, make big pancakes, much thicker than the preceding ones– 3 to 4 mm (1 1/4" to 1 3/4")–and cook in the same way.

They should be eaten dipped in melted butter and served with mint tea.

sfenj

Ingredients for about 15 fritters

- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of flour*
- *15 g (1/2 oz) of baker's yeast*
- *1 ½ glassfuls of luke-warm water*
- *1 teaspoonful of salt*
- *oil for frying*

Sieve the flour and form a hollow in which the yeast, mixed with the salt, should be placed. Bring the flour into the middle mixing gradually with the yeast mixture and the water to produce a stiff dough. Knead energetically for about 20 minutes then add the remainder of the water, little by little, aerating the dough by beating it against the table (see method for making ouarka dial bastela dough, page 14).

A soft, pliable dough is thus produced. Place in a bowl, cover and leave to rise in a warm place for 2 or 3 hours. Then repeat the process. Take a piece of dough the size of a hen's egg in oily fingers and make a hold in the middle of it. Plunge it into boiling oil. Keep the hole open with a kefta skewer.

Shape the other fritters and plunge one after the other in the boiling oil, turning them over quickly so they rise well and brown evenly. Take out with a hook and leave to drain. Serve for breakfast with mint tea, with or without honey, according to taste.

beghrir

The Beghrir is a kind of pancake, smooth on one side and full of tiny bubbles on the other. It is light and soft and should be eaten with butter honey and caster sugar (see page 15).

dairy foods

curds and whey

The milk is curdled with artichoke beard which is dried and kept in a well-covered preserving jar.

Ingredients for 1 litre (2 pts) of milk

1 soupspoonful of wild artichoke beard
2 soupspoonfuls of orange-flower water
4 to 5 soupspoonfuls of caster sugar, to taste

Put a soupspoonful of crushed artichoke beard in a bowl and cover with tepid water. Warm the milk, after flavouring with the orangeflower water and adding sugar. Press the artichoke beard through a fine muslin and quickly mix the juice with the warm milk. Pour the milk into bowls at once, cover and leave to curdle in a fairly warm place for about 1 to 1½ hours. Then put in a cold place until ready to serve at the end of a meal.

lben

Lben is a kind of whey which is prepared either in a chkoua (goatskin bottle) or a Khabia, a special jar for this purpose.

First, put the milk in a Gdra (earthenware dish), cover and leave to curdle. This will take 2 to 4 days depending on the weather.

Then pour the milk in the Chkoua which should be hung up by 2 pieces of cord to the fork of 2 branches of a tree in the country. It has to be swung to and fro patiently until a special splashing sound indicates that the particles of fat with which butter is made are separated from the curdled milk.

Empty the lben into a special jar after passing through a fine sieve.

The curdled milk should similarly be poured into the Khabia and stirred with a wooden stick with a sort of wooden plate at the end.

The wooden lid has a hole in it through which the wooden stick can be moved up and down in the curdled milk.

lben

When particles of fat appear on the surface of the lid the lben is ready.
To help with the preparation add 1 litre (2 pts) of warm water to the Chkoua or Khabia at the beginning of the operation.
Serve very cold on its own, or with Saycouk (see recipe, page 148).
Small quantities of lben can be whisked in an electric mixer.

fresh cream cheese (Fresh jbane)

This is only prepared in dairies. It is a sort of curdled milk which is strained in muslin bags and eaten when free from whey with sugar.

fresh cream cheese (Salt jbane)

This is curdled milk which is strained and then left to dry in a flat alfalfa basket. It looks like a round, hard, flat cheese. It is sold in markets, like fresh jbane, and is made principally from goat's milk.

desserts and pastries

haloua rhifa

This honey cake is very rich and is usually served at weddings, circumcisions or births. It is arranged in a cone shape with a ball of fresh butter on the top.

Principale it is prepared by specialists in very large quantities. However here are the quantities for approximately ten persons

250 g (9 oz) of hard wheat flour sieved in a silk sieve
250 g (9 oz) of fine white flour
1 teaspoonful of salt
½ teaglassful of orange-flower water
oil for frying
water
2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of honey

Make a dough with the flour, salt and water. Knead hard for 30 minutes giving it the consistency of a Rghaif dough (see recipe page 150).

Coat this dough with oil and shape small balls about the size of an apricot. Put the oil to boil in a frying pan, roll out and flatten the first ball of dough to a square of pastry the thickness of a sheet of paper. Fry golden brown on both sides in the oil, drain and crush with a skimmer in the "gsâà" and prepare the remaining balls of dough, one person cooking them while the other crushes them in the "gsâà".

Heat half the honey with the orange-flower water. Leave to boil for a few minutes then add the crumbs of crushed pastry. Leave on the heat for a few moments then spread this pastry in the "gsâà" and leave to stand for 24 hours.

The next day, bring the remainder of the honey to the boil, remove from the heat and pour over the paste, stirring all the time. Mix well and leave to drip in a colander. Press to get rid of the excess oil then arrange on a round dish and leave to get cold.

briouats with honey and almonds

Ingredients for about 100 cakes
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of almonds
375 g (14 oz) of caster sugar
2 teaspoonfuls of cinnamon
4 whole eggs
3/4 litre (1 ½ pts) of oil (to fry the almonds)
½ teaglassful or orange-flower water
2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of honey
oil for frying
1 bastela or ouarka pastry layer measuring 15 × 10 cm (6" × 4") for each envelope

Peel the almonds and put 3/4 litre of oil on to boil. Wipe the almonds and put them in the oil. Let them colour very slightly and remove at once from the oil and drain. Keep the oil.

Pass these fried almonds through a meat mincer. Put half of their frying oil back on the heat and bring to the boil. Lower the heat and add the crushed almonds with the sugar and cinnamon to the oil, then the beaten eggs, little by little, stirring all the time. Add the orangeflower water and remove from the heat.

When the almond paste is cold fold the briouats either in triangles or oblongs following the instructions given on page 43.

Fry in oil, browning them on both sides and dip while still piping hot in boiling honey. Allow the briouats to absorb the honey while the next batch are browning in the fat. Then take them from the honey and leave to drip. While each batch of briouats is frying, re-heat the honey for a few moments to keep it really hot.

When cold, the briouats can be stored in an airtight tin.

griouches

Ingredients

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of flour kneaded with a piece of leaven as big as a fairly large tomato (see recipe page 14)
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of fine flour
1 whole egg
1 egg yolk
250 g (9 oz) of grilled sesame seeds put through a meat mincer 3 times
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of grilled sesame seeds to sprinkle over the cooked cakes
½ teaglassful of vinegar
½ teaglassful of orange-flower water
½ teaglassful of melted butter
1 teaglassful of groundnut oil
1 good pinch of crushed saffron flowers
6 litres (11 pts) of honey
4 litres (7 pts) of oil for frying

The day before:

Sieve 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of flour, make a hollow and place the salt and the leaven or 20 g (1 oz) of baker's yeast in a little water and mix with the flour to make a stiff dough as for bread. Knead well for 30 minutes and shape into a ball. Place in a deep bowl. Cover and leave to prove in a fairly hot place until the next day.

The next day:

The place where the dough is to be prepared should be warm. This is most important. Close the doors and the windows if necessary.

Wash, drain and grill the sesame seeds, passing 250 g (9 oz) through the mincer 3 times. Sieve the fine flour and add it to the ground sesame seeds, together with the melted butter and oil.

Heat the vinegar and the orange-flower water. Dissolve the saffron in this liquid and add to the dough which was left to rise the day before. Add the whole egg and the egg yolk together with the flour and sesame seeds dough. Knead this dough energetically throughout the preparation of the griouches.

At least 2 people are needed to prepare these cakes, one kneading the dough and the other shaping the cakes. Take a ball of dough, flatten and roll it out lengthwise with a rolling pin to about 2 mm (1/10") thickness, turning over often. Cut with a pastry cutter squares about 10 cm (4") long, then cut them into strips 2 cm (1") wide. Put the forefinger of the left hand in every uneven strip, seize the two right hand corners with the right hand and press together so that they stick. Then put the cake down gently, overlapping the strips without breaking them and cover.

When all the cakes are shaped, leave them to rise for about 30 minutes. Brown on both sides in boiling oil and dip immediately in the honey which has been brought to the boil for a few minutes and removed from the heat. Leave to absorb the honey while the next batch of griouches is browning in the oil. Remove with a skimmer and sprinkle the cakes with grilled sesame seeds while they are still hot.

Put the honey on to re-heat now and again as it should remain very hot.

Griouch

If the griouches have beem made successfully, they should absorb about half or more of the honey. Leave to get cold and store in an airtight tin.
N.B. The remainder of the honey can be used for making briouats with honey or haloua dial jeljlène (sesame seeds in honey).

haloua chebbakia

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250 g (9 oz) of hard wheat flour passed through a silk sieve
250 g (9 oz) of fine flour
1 heaped teaspoonful of salt
20 g (1 oz) of baker's yeast
2 kg (4 lbs 7 oz) of honey
water

Put the flour in a "gsâà" and make a hollow. Put the yeast, mixed with a little water, and the salt in the hollow, draw in the flour and mix to a dough with tepid water. It should be fairly stiff.

Knead hard for 20 minutes then gradually add water, aerating the dough by beating it with both hands against the "gsâà" as in the recipe for ouarka pastry (page 14). Add water until the dough is quite liquid, somewhere between fritter batter and dough for beghrir (see page 15). Leave it for 3 hours. Put the boiling oil into a pan. Pour the honey into a big saucepan, bring to the boil and remove from the heat.

Fill a funnel with batter and stop up the outlet with the forefinger of one hand. Aim at the frying pan of boiling oil from a reasonable height and, freeing the outlet of the funnel by removing the forefinger, draw a round-petalled flower with the batter in the oil. Make the petals overlap, the whole flower being about 15 cm (6") in diameter. Brown on both sides and plunge in the hot honey. Leave a few minutes in the honey and then leave to drip. Cook all the batter in this way.

Put the honey back to re-heat from time to time to keep it up to the right temperature. Serve with Harira or at the end of a meal.

ghoriba shortcake made with butter

Ingredients for 60 to 70 biscuits
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of fine flour
250 g (9 oz) of hard-wheat flour sieved through a silk sieve
250 g (9 oz) of icing sugar
450 g (1 lb) of softened butter

Carefully mix the softened butter, icing sugar and sieved flour. Form into a large ball of dough and leave to stand for a few hours.

Put this mixture through the mincer twice, then knead for a few minutes.

Take a piece of dough the size of a walnut, form a ball and flatten slightly by passing it from the palm of one hand to the other. Prepare all the dough this way. Arrange on an ungreased baking sheet and cook in a moderate oven for 15 to 20 minutes.

semolina ghoriba

For about 50 biscuits

- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of fine semolina*
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of caster sugar*
- *6 eggs*
- *½ teaglassful of groundnut oil*
- *½ teaglassful of melted butter*
- *1 sachet (2 tsp) of baking powder*
- *1 sachet of vanilla flavoured sugar*

Beat the eggs with the sugar until the mixture becomes white then add the oil, butter, baking powder and vanilla flavoured sugar. Mix these ingredients with the semolina. Smear the hands frequently with orange-flower water while shaping balls of dough the size of a large walnut. Flatten a little by pressing onto a little icing sugar on one side to give them the appearance of macaroons. Put on a buttered baking sheet progressively, fairly well spaced out, sugar side up.

Cook in a moderate oven for 15 to 20 minutes.

ghoriba dial jeljlane (sesame seeds)

Ingredients for approximately 40 cakes

- *250 g (9 oz) of sesame seeds (grilled)*
- *100 g (4 oz) of fine flour (grilled)*
- *200 g (7 oz) of caster sugar*
- *3 whole eggs*
- *1 sachet (2 tsp) of baking powder*
- *the zest of 1 grated lemon*

Wash, drain and grill the sesame seeds on top of the stove, stirring them all the time until they are golden brown all over. Toast the flour in the same way and sieve through a silk sieve.

Then put the sesame seeds through the mincer and mix together on the table with the caster sugar, baking powder and lemon zest. Make a hollow in the flour mixture and break 3 eggs in it and knead thoroughly until a very slack dough, hardly suitable for handling is produced. Smear the hands with oil and shape balls of dough the size of walnuts flattening them slightly by pressing them on a little icing sugar.

Place on an oiled baking sheet progressively, sugar side up, and cook in a moderate oven for about 15 minutes.

ghoriba with almonds

Ingredients for 80 to 90 cakes
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of almonds
650 g (1 lb 7 oz) of icing sugar
3 whole eggs
the zest of 1 lemon
1 sachet of vanilla-flavoured sugar

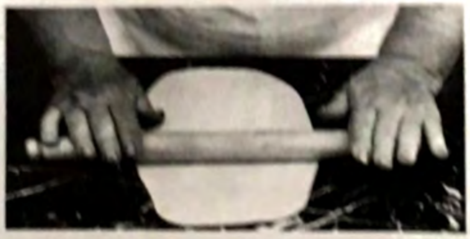
Skin the almonds and put through a mincer twice. Beat the eggs with the icing sugar until the mixture is white. Add the finely grated zest and the vanilla - flavoured sugar. Mix with the almond paste. This paste will be almost too stiff to handle. Smear the hands with butter and make balls of paste the size of a big walnut. Flatten the balls of paste slightly, pressing them on to a little icing sugar and arrange progressively on a buttered baking sheet, reasonably spaced out, sugar side up. Cook in a moderate oven for 15 to 20 minutes.

kaab el ghzal (Gazelle's hams)

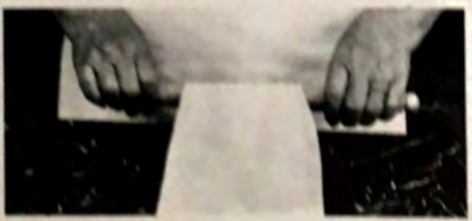
Ingredients for 70 to 80 cakes
Almond Paste
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of almonds
700 g (1 lb 9 oz) caster sugar
3/4 glassful of orange-flower water
1/2 teaspoonful of cinnamon
1 knob of butter the size of an egg
Pastry
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of flour
2 soupspoonfuls of orange-
flower water
1 egg
1 soupsfoonful of melted butter

Preparation of the almond paste:
Peel the almonds, rinse and wipe with a clean cloth. Add the sugar and orange-flower water. Put through the meat mincer once then add the cinnamon, the butter and the whole egg. Mix well and put through the mincer twice more. Knead this paste hard. Take a piece of almond paste the size of a fairly large apricot and shape into a small sausage, tapering each end. Continue making these sausages until all the paste has been used.

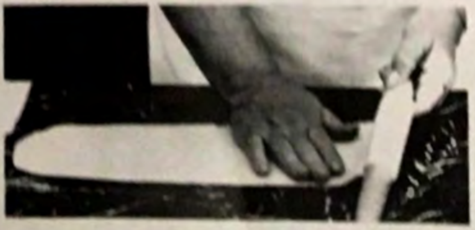
Preparation of the pastry:
Sieve the flour, make a hollow and put the butter and the orange-flower water in it. gradually, mixing to obtain a dough the consistency of bread dough.
Knead hard for 30 minutes taking care not to spoil its elasticity.
While preparing the gazelle's horns, another person should continue kneading the dough until it is all used up.



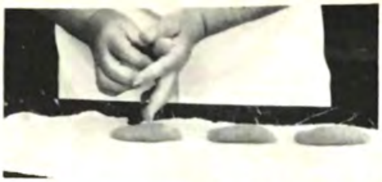
Take a piece of dough, make a ball the size of an orange and roll out, turning over ◂ several times.



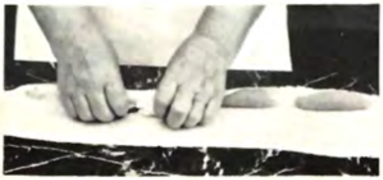
Roll the pastry round the rolling pin, ◂ stretching it gently so as not to break it.



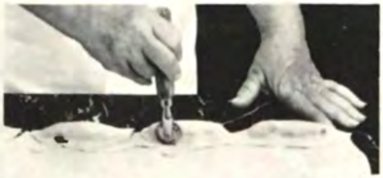
Continue stretching while unrolling it on the table to form a long ribbon, quite wide but only 1 mm (1/24") thick, like thin card- ◂ board.



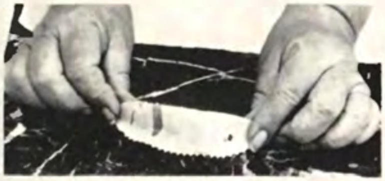
Place the little sausages of almond paste along the ribbon of dough horizontally, leaving about 3 to 4 cm (1 ¼" to 1 3/4") between each of them.



Stretch the pastry sideways as thin as possible and fold in two to cover the almond sausages.



Cut the pastry with a saw-edge pastry-cutter about 2 to 3 mm (1/10") from the tip for each gazelle's horn.



Pinch lengthways, giving the cake the shape of a crescent. Prick each one with a fork. Place on a buttered baking sheet and cook in a moderate oven for 15 to 20 minutes.

kaab el ghzal m'fenned

Same preparation as preceding recipe.
The pastry layers should be a little thicker. Keep them in the shape of small sausages and when cooked dip them while still hot in orange-flower water, heated beforehand, and roll in icing sugar.

stuffed dates

Ingredients for 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of almonds
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of best Algerian dates (not over-ripe)
250 g (9 oz) of caster sugar
3 soupspoonfuls of orange-flower water
red or green colouring matter

Skin the almonds, wipe with a clean cloth and brown lightly in the oven. Add the caster sugar and the orange-flower water and put through the mincer twice. Add a drop of green or red colouring matter to make the mixture a pale pastel shade.
Wipe the dates and take out the stones through an incision in the side. Stuff with a little roll of smooth almond paste. Roll in sugar and put on a plate.

Kaab el ghzal (Gazelle's harns)

fakia del moulouk

Ingredients for 100 cakes
Almond paste:
- *500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of almonds*
- *200 g (7 oz) of caster sugar*
- *½ teaspoonful of cinnamon*
- *1 soupspoonful of melted butter*
- *3 soupspoonfuls of orange-flower water*
- *red, green and yellow colouring matter*
- *cloves or flaked almonds*

Pastry:
- *100 g (4 oz) of flour*
- *3 soupspoonfuls or orange-flower water*
- *1 soupspoonful of melted butter*

Skin the almonds, wipe with a clean cloth and mix with the sugar and orange-flower water. Put through a mincer 3 times. Add the melted butter and cinnamon and knead the paste a little.

Divide in 3 and colour with the 3 different colours. Make balls the size and shape of walnuts and put on one side.

Mix the flour with the orange-flower water and melted butter. Knead hard. Roll out the pastry, turning it over several times, then roll it round the rolling pin, stretching it lightly all the time to keep its elasticity. Unroll the pastry on the table in a long ribbon, the thickness of thin cardboard. Cut strips 3 mm (about 1/10") wide with a serrated pastry-cutter. Wrap a ribbon of this pastry round each piece of almond paste, just like tying a ribbon round an Easter egg. Stick a clove or an almond flake on top of each one, put on an oiled baking-sheet and cook in a moderate oven for 10 to 15 minutes.

jabane

Ingredients
- *200 g (7 oz) of skinned, roasted almonds (prepared in the oven)*
- *4 stiffly beaten egg whites*
- *1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of lump sugar*
- *1 ½ litres (3 pts) of water*
- *2 or 3 grains of gum-acacia (crushed)*
- *a piece of alum (chebba) the size of a chick-pea*

Put the sugar in a thick-bottomed saucepan and cover with ½ litre (1 pt) of water. Bring to the boil, add the crushed alum and gum-acacia, and cook until the syrup makes a thread. Remove from the heat just before it begins to colour.

Beat the eggs stiffy and pour gently onto them the lukewarm sugar. Continue beating for at least 20 minutes, then add the roasted almonds. Pour this white mixture in a deep dish. Leave to cool and sed hard before eating.

krachel (a sort of bun)

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1 ½ kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of fine flour
500 g (1 lbs 2 oz) of lump sugar pounded in a mortar
75 g (3 oz) of baker's yeast
3 soupspoonfuls mixed grilled sesame seeds and aniseed
4 or 5 grains of gum-acacia crushed with 1/2 teaspoonful of salt
1 teaglassful of melted butter
1 teaglassful of orange-flower water
more or less depending on the absorption of the flour

First, take half the flour sieve it adding a little salt. Mix with 50 g (2 oz) yeast diluted in a little water and knead, adding sufficient water to make a dough a little less stiff than for bread. Knead hard then place it in a bowl and cover with a cloth. Leave near a source of heat to prove for 2 or 3 hours

When the dough has risen, turn it out on the table and add the remainder of the flour, the pounded sugar, the remaining 25 g (1 oz) of yeast, the melted butter, warmed orange-flower water, aniseed and sesame seeds with the ground acacia. Knead hard. Rapidly shape balls the size of your fist and flatten lightly by passing them from the palm of one hand to the other to make small round buns about 1 cm (1/2″) thick.

As they are prepared place them on a blanket covered with a clean cloth. Cover warmly and leave to rise for approximately 2 to 3 hours.

Check the dough to see if it is completely risen by poking a finger gently in one of the buns. When the finger is withdrawn the dough should return to its shape.

Then brush the buns with egg yolk, prick with a fork in several places and put in the oven.

feqqas

Prepare the dough as for Krachel (above). Quickly shape little sticks 20 cm (8″) long, as thick as the finger. Place in a warm place on a blanket covered with a clean cloth. Cover and leave to rise for about 2 to 3 hours.

To see if the dough has fully risen, poke lightly with a finger. The dough should come back into its original shape when the finger is withdrawn. Prick with a fork in several different places and cook in the oven until they are half cooked, that is before they have started to brown.

Leave them to stand for several hours, until the next day even. Cut out rounds in the sticks 2 to 3 mm thick (about 1/10″). Place on an unbuttered baking tray and brown in the oven for a few minutes.

Store in airtight tins when cold so that they remain crisp.

bejmat

A much bigger and thicker type of Feqqas.
First make the Krachel buns (see page 169).
When the little buns have risen put them in the oven until they are just cooked but have not browned on top.
Take them out of the oven and leave to stand a few hours. Cut each bun in half, then each half in slices about 1/2 cm (1/4″) thick. Put the slices back in the oven until they are nicely browned.
Leave to get cold and store in an airtight tin so that they remain crisp.

almond feqqas

Made with almond paste, the traditional almond feqqas are wrapped in the same pastry as the gazelle's horns (kaab el ghzal) but the almond paste can also be wrapped in Bechkito dough (see page 183) made with half the amount of yeast.

Prepare the almond paste with:

- *250 g (9 oz) of almonds*
- *175 g (6 oz) of caster sugar*
- *1 egg yolk*
- *1 soupspoonful of orange-flower water*
- *1 soupspoonful of melted butter*
- *1/2 teaspoonful of cinnamon*

Skin the almonds after blanching in boiling water.
Wipe with a clean cloth and mix with the caster sugar and the orange-flower water and put through the mincer three times. Add the egg yolk, melted butter and cinnamon. Mix well. Shape fingers about 20 cm (8″) long, a little thicker than cigarettes.
Prepare the Bechkito dough with only half the amount of yeast.
Take a piece of the dough and roll it out as thin as possible on an oiled table (2 to 3 mm) (1/10″).
Put a finger of almond paste on top, lengthways, 1 cm (1/2″) from the edge, and roll the pastry round once. Cut close to the edge of this roll with a serrated pastry-cutter.
Prepare the remainder of the paste and pastry in the same way.
Almond sticks are made the thickness of a finger. Make them more even and thinner by rolling them, then cut them into little pieces like chick-peas with a pair of scissors. Place on an oiled baking sheet.
Cook in a moderate oven for 10 to 15 minutes and remove when golden brown. Leave to cool and store in airtight tins so that they remain crisp.
N.B. With the Bechkito dough left over make either plain, unstuffed Feqqas prepared in the same way or Bechkito (see page 183).
To wrap these Feqqas in gazelle's horn pastry, proceed in the same way but stretch the pastry as much as possible to make it very thin.

raisin and almond feqqas

Ingredients

250 g (9 oz) of icing sugar
3 whole eggs
1/2 teaglassful of melted butter
1/2 teaglassful of groundnut oil
250 g (9 oz) of almonds
250 g (9 oz) of seedless raisins
2 sachets (4 tsp) of baking powder
2 sachets of vanilla sugar
750 g (1 lb 10 oz) (approx.) of fine flour depending on how much liquid it absorbs.

Beat the eggs with the sugar until the mixture is white. Add the melted butter and oil and beat again.

Skin the almonds after blanching in boiling water. Wipe with a clean cloth and put through a mincer twice. Mix with the beaten egg mixture, add the vanilla sugar, baking powder and the raisins (which should have been washed and dried). Then gradually add the sieved flour until a pliable dough is made, a little less stiff than bread dough. Shape in sticks the size of a banana.

Put on an oiled baking sheet and cook until almost done. Remove from the oven before they brown.

Leave to stand until the next day and cut into rings about 1/2 cm (1/4″) thick, taking care not to break them. Place on an ungreased baking sheet and cook in the oven until golden brown.

When cold store in an airtight tin so that they remain crisp.

sellou

This is a tonic which is normally prepared during Ramadan or for a birth.

Ingredients

1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of fine flour
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of toasted sesame seeds
1 level soupspoonful of crushed aniseed
2 soupspoonfuls of powdered cinnamon
300 g (11 oz) of caster sugar
250 g (9 oz) of skinned almonds fried in 1/4 litre (1/2 pt) of oil
100 g (4 oz) of butter
300 g (11 oz) of honey
3 to 4 grains of gum-acacia crushed with a lump of sugar

Put the flour in a frying pan over a moderate heat and stir all the time until it turns golden brown. Then sieve.

Wash the sesame seeds and brown in the same way as the flour. Skin the almonds and fry in oil.

Mix the sesame seeds, almonds and caster sugar together and put through a mincer once.

Put the mixture in a gsââ after adding the flour, cinnamon, aniseed and gum-acacia.

Make a hollow in the mixture and pour in the butter and honey which have been heated in a saucepan until they are hot but not boiling and mixed with the oil in which the almonds have been fried. Stir well so that the flour absorbs this liquid.
When the mixture is smooth, arrange in a dome on a dish pressing it down well and sprinkle icing sugar with the sieve on top. Decorate with a few fried almonds.

tkaout

1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of sesame seeds (toasted)
250 g (9 oz) of almonds
2 soupspoonfuls of cinnamon
1 level soupspoonful of crushed aniseed
750 g (1 lb 10 oz) of caster sugar
3 or 4 grains of gum-acacia crushed with one sugar

Wash, drain and grill the sesame seeds in a pan, stirring all the time. Skin the almonds and fry them in oil.
Mix the almonds and sesame seeds with the sugar and put through a mincer one, then add the gum-acacia, cinnamon and aniseed (all crushed) to the mixture.
Arrange in a dome on a dish. Press down and sprinkle icing sugar with a sieve.

haloua dial jeljlane (sesame seeds in honey)

1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of grilled sesame seeds
1 level teaspoonful of powdered gum-acacia
1 1/2kg (3 lbs 5 oz) of honey
500 g (1 lb 2 oz) of almonds

Separately wash, drain and toast the sesame seeds and then the almonds. Put the almonds in a tbecq and rub hard between the palms of the hands to get rid of the skins. Crush very coarsely in a mortar. Put the honey on to boil (if possible use Chebbakiya honey). Leave to cook until it makes threads when poured from a spoon then add the gum-acacia, sesame seeds and almonds. Leave another 2 or 3 minutes on the heat then remove. Oil the table and pour the mixture over it. Leave to cool and harden. Cut into little squares.

(made with sugar)

Ingredients

2 glasses of grilled sesame seeds
1 glass of caster sugar
1 teaglassful of skinned almonds, cut in 2 lengthways, grilled or browned in the oven
1/2 teaspoonful of powdered gum-acacia

Wash, drain and toast the sesame seeds and then the almonds and slice them. Put on one side.
Put the caster sugar in a saucepan over the heat without adding any water and leave to melt while stirring until it begins to colour; then add the gum-acacia, sesame seeds and almonds. Mix and pour out quickly on an oiled table. Once it is cold, flatten with a rolling pin immediately and cut in little lozenges.

Haloua dial jeljlane (sesame seeds in honey)

milk bastela (ktefa)

This bastela can be filled in two ways
–either with milk (traditional recipe)
–or with "crème patissière" (confectionner's custard), made fairly thin.

how to prepare the milk:

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1 ½ litre (3 pts) of milk
4 soupspoonfuls of rice flour
1 teasglassful of orange-flower water
50 g (2 oz) of butter
250 g (9 oz) of peeled almonds coarsely sieved through a vegetable sieve
20 sugar lumps
30 pastry layers of ouarka of bastela (see recipe page 14)
oil for frying

Bring the milk to the boil with the sugar and add the rice flour, and the orange-flower water and the butter and leave to thicken slightly before removing from the heat. Leave to get cold.

Meanwhile skin the almonds, fry in oil and sieve. Add 1/2 teaglassful of caster sugar and put on one side.

Take the pile of ouarka layers and trim the edges carefully to make neat circles. Unstick the layers in pairs and fry golden brown with oil in the frying pan. Drain. 30 minutes before serving, put the browned bastela layers in a very slow oven to sweat out the oil for about 15 minutes and take them out. Place 3 layers on the dish in which they are to be served, sprinkle with crushed almonds, cover with 1 or 2 pastry layers and pour on a little of the cooled milk. Continue the layers of pastry, almonds,milk until all the pastry layers are used up. Pour a final layer of thickened milk over the top. Serve at once.

how to prepare the "Crème Patissière"

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30 ouarka layers (approximately)
see recipe page 14
250 g (9 oz) of almonds
1 teaglassful of caster sugar
oil for frying

Ingredients for the custard:
4 egg yolks
2 soupspoonfuls of flour
5 soupspoonfuls of sugar
1 ½ litre (3 pts) of milk
1 sachet of vanilla-flavoured sugar

Beat the egg whites until stiff. Bring the milk to the boil, and flavour with vanilla. Quickly cook spoonfuls of egg white in the boiling milk, then remove them from the milk. Put on one side.

Beat the yolks with the sugar until the mixture whitens. Add the flour and mix with the boiling milk, stirring gently all the time, away from the heat. Put back on a low heat and cook for a few minutes more, stirring gently. Remove from the heat and leave to cool. This cream should be thin, almost runny. If it thickens when cold add a little cold milk.

Milk bastela ktefa (above)
Milk bastela • crème patissière • (below)

30 minutes before serving, put the ouarka layers, already fried, in a very slow oven to sweat out the oil for 15 minutes. Peel the almonds and fry in oil. Pound coarsely and mix with a teaglassful of sugar. Then proceed as for bastela with milk. Put the cooked egg whites on top and sprinkle with a little caramellized sugar. Serve at once.

m'hencha

A round type of cake rolled, like a snake. The M'Hencha gets its name from the word "hench" which means snake.
It is made with a base of almond paste rolled in layers of bastela pastry, and should be browned in the oven and crusty.

Ingredients

About 30 ouarka layers for bastela in rectangles 20 × 30 cm
8″ × 12″ (see recipe page 14)
1 kg (2 lbs 3 oz) of almonds
2 soupspoonfuls of orange-flower water
700 g (1 lb 9 oz) of caster sugar
2 egg yolks
1 level soupspoonful of cinnamon

Preparation of the almond paste:

Skin the almonds after blanching in boiling water. Wipe them on a clean cloth and add the sugar and orange-flower water. Pass through a mincer three times running. Put this paste in a thick-bottomed saucepan on a low heat with the melted butter and mix gently with a palette knife until the sugar softens and sticks to the almond paste (approximately 15 to 20 minutes).
Take off the heat, leave to cool and mix the cinnamon and the 2 egg yolks in thoroughly.

Preparation of the M'hencha:

Shape long sticks of almond paste the thickness of your thumb. Stick 2 ouarka pastry layers together lengthways with egg yolk, the shiny side on the table. Place a stick of almond paste 2 or 3 cm (1″ or 1 1/4″) from the edge of these layers lengthways and roll all round. Stick the ends of the layers together with egg yolk. Do this with all the sticks of almond paste. Then take one of the wound-up sticks, roll it round like a snail's shell and place in the middle of the oiled baking sheet. Stick a second stick to the first one with egg yolk and slide the end in the envelope of the first one. Roll it like a snake round the first stick and continue until all the almond sticks have been used up. Brush the top with egg yolk and brown in the oven. Years ago this cake was put in the Tbsil dial bastela and browned all over on charcoal embers.
When it is nicely browned put it on a round dish and sprinkle with icing sugar and cinnamon.

bechkito (a sort of crisp butter biscuit)

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3 whole eggs
250 g (9 oz) of icing sugar
the zest of 1 lemon
3 level soupspoonfuls of corn starch
3/4 teaglassful of groundnut oil
2 sachets (4 tsp) of baking powder
400 to 600 g (approx. 1 lb) of fine flour according to the amound of liquid it absorbs

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Beat the eggs and the icing sugar until the mixture is white. Add the oil, continue beating and add the baking powder, the corn starch and lemon zest. Add the sieved flour little by little until an easy-to-handle dough is produced.

Oil the table and take a piece of dough and roll it out until it is about 3 mm (1/10″) thick. Cut out with a round pastry-cutter and arrange progressively on an oiled baking sheet Brush all over with egg yolk and cook in a moderate oven for 10 to 15 minutes.

tea

There are different qualities of green tea, the leaves of which may be big or small and vary in their degree of taste.
Very good quality green tea is often prepared without mint.

mint

Mint varies both in taste and appearance from one region to another. The most highly thought of is the Meknès variety. It has firm stalks and the leaves are dark green and highly flavoured. It should always be used fresh.

aromatic herbs

In some homes in winter when mint is hard to find and rather tasteless, other herbs are added to tea such as absinthe, verbena, marjoram, basil and orange-flower.
Green tea is the drink of both rich and poor alike and it is prepared with a smile at any hour of the day or night and on all occasions for friends, relatives or passing strangers. This hot beverage, which is sweetened differently according to taste and region, is part of traditional Moroccan hospitality. The tea table with round feet, made of copper or engraved brass, is always kept ready.
On the big tray are the glasses and teapots and on the small one there are cylindrical boxes, made of the same metal, containing green tea, mint, herbs and lump sugar.

for a reception

The master of the house proceeds with the tea-making as a rite. He takes up his position in front of the trays, the steaming samovar at hand, rinses the teapots with boiling water. (These teapots usually hold 3/4 litre–approximately 1 ½ pts.) He puts 2 or 3 teaspoonfuls of green tea in each one then adds half a teaglassful of boiling water which he then throws away.
He then adds sugar according to taste and fills the teapots with boiling water. This first glass of tea, which is the most appreciated by real tea-drinkers, is made without mint. The tea must of course be of excellent quality.
The tea is left to draw for a few minutes then the master of the house stirs it with a spoon, tastes it and half fills a teaglassful for each guest, pouring from both teapots at once.
While the guests drink their tea, congratulating the master on its quality, he smilingly prepares a second beverage, to which he will add mint. In the teapots where the first beverage has been made, he puts a good handful of mint after having crushed it in his hands. Then he adds a teaspoonful of tea and sugar. He fills the teapots with boiling water, makes sure that the mint leaves do not float back to the surface, covers the teapots or puts them on the samovar pipe and leaves them to draw. Then he stirs briskly with a spoon, gently crushing the mint which is on the bottom, and tastes. He then carefully pours some of the beverage from each teapot into the guests' glasses. Another glass of tea can then be prepared, given more taste by adding a little absinthe or, for those who like them, other tea herbs such as verbena, marjoram and basil.

coffee

Undeniably tea has taken the place of cofee in Morocco.
Coffee is made in the Turkish way and, when it has drawn sufficiently, sugar is added and it is then flavoured with cinnamon and orange-flower water.

orange-flower water

How to distill:

Orange-flower water is made from the flowers of the bitter orange tree. It can be bought from shops but has more flavour when made at home.

In spring pick the flowers and spread them out for 2 days on a cloth in a sheltered place. The orange-flower water can then be made.

The distilling takes half a day for 6 kg (13 lbs) of flowers which yield about 10 litres (18 pts) of orange-flower water.

A Quettara, or copper still, is used for this operation. The still consists of 3 parts:

1. The first part is called the Gdra and is where the water is boiled.
2. The centre part which is called a Keskes has holes in it and resembles the upper part of a couscous steamer. It contrains the flowers for distilling.
3. The upper part of the still or Quettara which is filled with water. It consists of 2 pipes.

Fill the Gdra with water. Put 2 handfuls of orange flowers and 3 bitter oranges in the water and bring to the boil. Put the Keskes on top. Fill with flowers and cover with the Quettara, filled with cold water. Put the 3 parts together and place a quart bottle at the outlet of the lowest pipe from which the distilled water will trickle, drop by drop. This is condensed steam which has passed through the flowers and absorbed their flavour.

Empty the water from the Quettara by the second tube as soon as it begins to get hot and replace with cold water. The heat of the stove should be only moderate.

When one bottle is full put another in its place. Fill the 10 bottles, leave them to cool and then cork them carefully. They should not be used for 4 or 5 months after being distilled. Rose-water can be distilled in the same way.

cool drinks

flavoured water

Throw a few grains of gum-acacia on the glowing embers of a barbecue.

When it begins to smoke, put an earthenware jar upside down over the barbecue. Leave it to become impregnated with the perfume of the gum-acacia for a few minutes. Then put water lightly flavoured with orange-flower water in the jar. Cover and allow to get cold before drinking.

orange juice

Prepare sweetened orange juice and flavour it with orange-flower water.

lemonade

Add a lot of water to fresh lemon juice prepared from ripe lemons. Add sugar to taste and flavour with orange-flower water.

grape juice

Press and crush bunches of grapes and put through a fine sieve. Add a dash of lemon juice and flavour with orange-flower water and cinnamon. Do not add much sugar as the grapes are already sweet.

pomegranate juice

Wash big red pomegranates grains and put through a vegetable sieve. Add the juice of a lemon, put through a fine sieve, sweeten to taste and add orange-flower water.

milk of almonds

Ingredients

250 g (9 oz) of almonds
350 g (13 oz) of caster sugar
1 litre (2 pts) of water
3 litres (5 pts) of milk
1/2 teaglassful of orange-flower water

Skin the almonds, mix with half of the caster sugar and put through a mincer 4 times. Then pound this paste in a mortar, little by little, as fine as possible and leave to soak in 1 litre (2 pts) of water.

Add the remainder of the sugar to the milk. Flavour with the orange-flower water, strain through a "chinois" (a very fine coneshaped sieve) and mix with the sweetened milk. Serve very cold.

If you possess an electric mixer, the almonds can be put through this, mixed with an equal volume of liquid, after having been put through the mincer. The liquid can then be sweetened and sieved as above.

fruit

Fruit is abundant, luscious and varied in MOROCCO and therefore has an important place in Moraoccan eating.
MOROCCO which benefits from remarkable climatic conditions and a great diversity of soil is primarily an agricultural country. Fruit and vegetables grow very easily there; but it is in particular citrus fruits like oranges, lemons, grapefruits, etc., which benefit most from the conditions for producing fruit all the year round. For this reason the Moroccan government does everything in its power to foster the development of this produce both for the home market and for export.
In this way delicious MOROCCAN oranges are sent all over the world throughout the year–Navels in November, then Sanguinellis and Washingtons, etc.,–in fact all those types of oranges with which we are familiar and which we appreciate so much.
Fruit is widely consumed in Morocco where the people are real connoisseurs.
It is very rich in sugar, water and vitamins and inexpensive. It is, therefore, a mainstay for the population whether nomad, town-dwelling or peasant. Dates and watermelons, oranges and almonds, olives and lemons are a necessary supplement to a diet which is sometimes frugal.
Fruit in put to all culinary uses in the family home. It is always the final note of any meal. Moroccan cooking possesses a relatively small range of desserts. A few puddings, a number of pancakes and fritters and pastry made with honey is about the full extent of sweet Moroccan dishes, as can be seen from this book.
It is for this reason that fresh fruit, copiously served, varied and magnificent, sometimes prepared as fruit salad, is the traditional end to any meal. Furthermore, it is used in a number of recipes. Couscous is eaten with raisins and almonds; meat and poultry are cooked with prunes.

Black, green or violet olives improve the flavour of simmered tajines with their aroma. Pickled lemons and oranges blend happily with meat and vegetables–and the result is delicious.

During the hottest hours of the day it is pleasant to be able to suck an orange, bite into a peach, pick grapes from the bunch or sip the sweet juice of a golden-ripe apricot.

For tourists it is an unending source of pleasure to see the most attractive displays possible of fruit and vegetables. And no village is too poor not to have a shop where fruit and vegetables are piled up to delight the eye, both under the glare of the sun and, at nightfall, in the light of an acetylene lamp.

As he has a natural gift for colour and a sense of the harmony of form, the Moroccan always knows how to offer his customer the most enticing "still life" studies which in their turn will go to make up the most elaborate baskets of fruit to satisfy the most demanding Epicurean.

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3 MENU SUGGESTIONS

1. Delaâ M'hamra
- Couscous as desired
- Fruit basket

2. Oven-cooked fish
- Chicken with pickled lemons
- Fruit basket.

3. Varied Brochettes (Kefta, Kabab, heart) accompanied by small salads
- M'hammer Chicken
- Bastela with milk

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